Marxism Today

Theoretical and Discussion Journal of the Communist Party

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CONTENTS

Editorial Comments

JOAN SHAW **Crisis in the Sudan**

ANN GRAY **Brecht and 'a Unity of Opposites'**

STANLEY HUTCHINS **The Communard Exiles in Britain** (*continuation*)

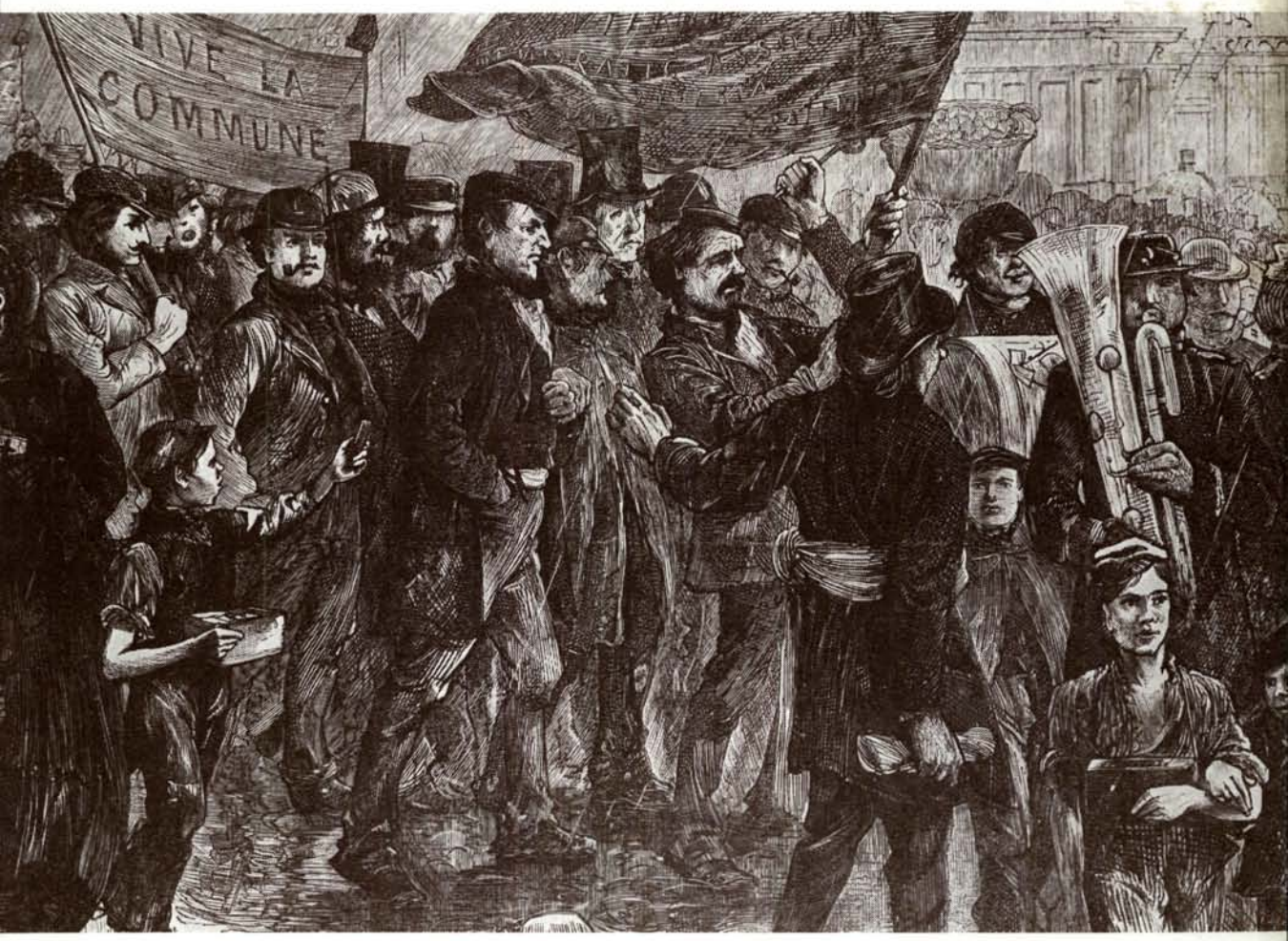
Discussion:

BILL FINDLAY, JOHN ROBSON **Socialism, Democracy and the One-Party System**

SID ATKIN, SID OGILVIE **The Strategy of Socialist Revolution in Britain**

WALTER W. GREAVES **Why did it Happen?**

OUAINÉ BAIN **Intelligence, Race, Class and Education**



100 Years Ago. London Demonstration in Support of the Paris Commune, April 16, 1871.

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MARXISM TODAY

THEORETICAL AND DISCUSSION JOURNAL OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY

Volume 15 Number 4

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CONTENTS

	Editorial Comments	97
Joan Shaw	**Crisis in the Sudan**	101
Ann Gray	**Brecht and "a Unity of Opposites"**	109
Stanley Hutchins	**The Communard Exiles in Britain (continuation)**	117
Discussion:		
Bill Findlay **John Robson**	**Socialism, Democracy and the One-Party System**	120
Sid Atkin **Sid Ogilvie**	**The Strategy of Socialist Revolution in Britain**	123
Walter W. Greaves	**Why Did it Happen?**	126
Ouaine Bain	**Intelligence, Race, Class and Education**	127

AMONGST ARTICLES IN MAY AND FORTHCOMING ISSUES

Bert Baker	**Television Today**
Bill Baker	**The SDF and the Boer War**
Roger Bartra	**The Asiatic Mode of Production**
Ron Bellamy	**The Effects of Imperialism upon Britain**
Alan Bold	**Modernism in Modern Life**
Jean Bruhat	**Political Trends within the Commune**
Mick Costello	**Anarchist Ideas Today**
Pat Devine	**Academic Freedom**
Ruth and Edward Frow	**On the Robert Owen Bicentenary**
Jacques Girault	**Students in the Commune**
Nan Green	**Diversity in the Latin American Revolution**
Communist Party of Israel	**Nature of Zionism**
Martin Jacques	**Notes on Intellectuals**
John Lewis	**The Ideas of Louis Althusser**
John Oakley	**Marcuse and Marxism**
David Pavett	**Lucien Seve on the Theory of Personality**
Gordon Robinson	**Aspects of the Philosophy of Antonio Gramsci**
Christopher Strachan	**May-June 1968 in France—a Retrospect**
"Voprosi Istorii"	**Some Problems of the Theory of the Nation: Results of a Discussion**
Willy Thompson	**Chomsky**

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Editorial Comments

THE GREAT NATIONAL demonstration against the Industrial Relations Bill, organised by the TUC on February 21st last, was claimed by Victor Feather to be the biggest London had seen this century.

It was certainly one of the great working class demonstrations of our time, a fitting start to the strike on March 1st and the more massive "turn-out" on March 18th in which the TGWU and the Engineers Union played such a prominent part.

February 21st recalls—and re-emphasises—the great role played by mass demonstrations throughout the whole of British Labour history in the fight for democratic advance, against repressive legislation and attacks on the workers living standards.

Space permits mention of only a few. Chartism, the mighty movement for universal manhood suffrage, produced some of the largest demonstrations in the main towns of this country, many of which have never been excelled since. In 1838, shortly after the adoption of the Charter, mass demonstrations to hear about and endorse the famous 6 points were held throughout the country. The numbers attending were enormous by any standards. 200,000 in Glasgow with 200 banners and 40 bands; 80,000 in Newcastle; 200,000 in Birmingham; 250,000 at Pear Green, Yorkshire; 300,000 at Kersal Moor, just outside Manchester, etc.

April 10th, 1848, 10 years later, was an important day for Chartism. A huge meeting had been called on Kennington Common, London. From this a march was to take place to Parliament, bearing the third petition in support of the Charter. Troops, police and thousands of special constables were all mobilised to prevent this.

But one of the additional "preparations" has a familiar ring in connection with the Industrial Relations Bill. Legislation was rushed through Parliament making certain seditious deeds felony. Among them were acts "seeking to intimidate or overawe both Houses of Parliament" and "openly or advisedly writing and speaking to this effect".

The next big demonstrations were witnessed and reported by Marx in two superb pieces of journalistic writing[1] (splendidly translated too) in Hyde Park in June and July 1855. They were directed first against the "Beer Bill" which "shut down places of entertainment on Sundays except between 6 and 10 p.m." and against the Sunday Trading Bill, aimed at closing shops on Sundays, thus making it almost impossible for workers, who only got their wages late on Saturday night in those days, to buy food and other necessities.

The meetings were called for 3 p.m. on two successive Sunday afternoons. At the first meeting "at 3 o'clock, approximately 50,000 had gathered . . . gradually the assembled multitude swelled to a total of at least 200,000"[2] At the second, which was prohibited by the Chief of Police, Sir Richard Mayne, ". . . even according to the account given in the Police Bulletin, at half past two already 150,000 people of every age and stature, surged up and down the Park. . . ."[3] Marx has much to say about the behaviour of the police on both occasions which evoke familiar echoes.

Great struggles preceded the passing of the Second Reform Act of 1867 in the course of which the right of the people of London to use Hyde Park for political demonstrations was challenged. At the beginning of July 1866, the Reform League decided to organise a meeting in Hyde Park to further its campaign for electoral reform. The same Sir Richard Mayne was charged with preventing the entry of any demonstration into the park. The London crowd smashed the railings round the park and for three days and nights there was a running battle between them and the police.

Less than a year later on March 6th, 1867, the Reform League decided to stage another huge demonstration in Hyde Park. This was again prohibited by the Government and vast concentrations of military and police drafted in. In vain. A demonstration which started from Clerkenwell Green, headed by

[1] See Marx and Engels—"On Britain". Lawrence and Wishart pp. 414-425.
[2] *Ibid.*
[3] *Ibid.*

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a red flag, marched into the Park and soon there were between 100,000 and 150,000 people in the Park.

AGAINST UNEMPLOYMENT, FASCISM AND WAR

And so one could go on mentioning marches and demonstrations in London linked with each phase of working class struggle. Two or three must suffice—those which took place in "modern times" and are connected with the struggle against unemployment, fascism and war.

The struggle of the unemployed against the Means Test was highlighted by the various Hunger Marches to London. Wal Hannington, writing of the arrival of the marchers in Trafalgar Square during the National Hunger March of 1929, recalls:

> "From the plinth one looked down upon a sea of faces extending far beyond the balconies of the square, overflowing in a continuous mass into the roadway on all sides. It was the mightiest working class demonstration that had ever been seen in that historic meeting place".[4]

The fight against Mosley's fascism witnessed two of the largest demonstrations ever seen in London. The first was a counter-demonstration against one organised by Oswald Mosley in Hyde Park on September 9th, 1934. It is calculated that 250,000 people rallied to the call of the Communist Party to demonstrate their hatred of fascism. Mosley's thugs, surrounded by hundreds of policemen, were shepherded ignominiously from the Park. And in December 1937, when Mosley attempted his provocative march through the East End of London even more people rallied to bar the road to him and his blackshirts. The slogan was "They shall not pass". And they did not.

But perhaps the demonstration which is green in the memory of all who participated, was the monster May Day march on May 1st, 1926, which heralded the General Strike. Contingents came from all over London and some were still en route for Hyde Park when the traditional meeting was over. This was perhaps the greatest demonstration of them all—in numbers and in fighting spirit.

THE GREAT CONTRAST

When this issue of *Marxism Today* is published the 24th Congress will have opened of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union.

One of the documents that will be discussed at this Congress will be the Draft Directives for the New Five-Year Plan, 1971-75, drawn up by the Central Committee of the CPSU.

Writing from the midst of a major Tory offensive against living standards and at a time of the swiftest rise of prices in the history of Britain to date, it is hard to imagine a document that would more strikingly underline the economic argument for the need of socialism in Britain.

The Draft Five-Year Plan envisages a 37-40 per cent increase in Soviet national income over five years, a rise of 30 per cent in real income per capita of the population.

It is very significant that this is the first Five-Year Plan in which the increase in Group B, *consumer goods,* estimated at 44-48 per cent over the five years, is greater than the increase in Group A, industrial production, estimated at 41-45 per cent.

As one studies the detailed sections of the Draft Plan the contrast with Tory Britain stands out in ever greater relief.

Whilst it is planned in general to achieve stability in retail prices of consumer goods, prices of certain goods will be reduced.

It is estimated that funds for public consumption will be increased by some 40 per cent over the five years and that these will be used especially for health, education, child care and pensions.

For those who might doubt the ability of the Soviet Union to achieve such aims, the Draft Plan includes a summary of the results of the previous, 1966-70, Plan.

In 1970 the national income was 41 per cent above that of 1965; and industrial production was up 50 per cent in the same period. The real income per capita had been planned to rise 30 per cent and had in fact risen 33 per cent, whilst the wages of factory and office workers, rose 26 per cent against a planned rise of 20 per cent.

We do not know whether the Congress will modify the Draft but results of the previous plan and the draft directive for the one that will follow show up in the greatest contrast with the economic perspectives of capitalist Britain.

MARX'S GRUNDRISSE

Macmillans have published a volume of 156 pages, containing 137 pages of extracts, translated and edited by David McLellan, from the large manuscript of Marx known as *Grundrisse.*[5]

[4] Wall Hannington—"Unemployed Struggles 1919-1936". Lawrence and Wishart p. 196.

[5] "Marx's Grundrisse", Macmillan, £2.50.

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David McLellan, who has already published translations of some selected early texts of Marx and two books on the young Marx, is a very capable Marxist scholar. His extracts from *Grundrisse* are well chosen, showing how Marx worked out in these manuscripts fundamental ideas that found expression in the subsequently published volumes of *Capital*. This slim and (considering the difficulties) remarkably readable book of extracts will be of great service to all who seek a deeper understanding of Marx's thought. Though most of the passages selected for translation are quite brief, McLellan has arranged them cleverly so that the reader is not perplexed by the "bitty" impression often produced by the making of extracts.

The whole *Grundisse* is a work of some 1,000 pages. So only a very small instalment of it is offered here. English readers will have to await the translation of the whole which will appear in the complete English edition of Marx' and Engels' works now in preparation. These extracts are not, however (as the publishers claim in the "blurb" on the jacket in which they have wrapped their wares, though their editor with more respect for facts contradicts this claim in a footnote), the first English translation of any "substantial extracts" from *Grundrisse*. The book *Pre-Capitalist Economic Formations* (Lawrence and Wishart, 1964; reprinted 1969), edited by E. J. Hobsbawm, contained a translation by Jack Cohen of a complete and very important section of *Grundrisse*, in which Marx dealt with so-called (and so often misunderstood) "stages" of economic development.

McLellan describes the *Grundrisse* as "the most fundamental work that Marx ever wrote. . . . In a sense, none of Marx's works is complete, but the completest of them is the *Grundrisse*". If, indeed, *Capital* is regarded as Marx's central achievement, then this description of the *Grundrisse* is justified, since it contains his comprehensive working out of ideas, not all of which are elaborated in *Capital*, from which he had hoped in the end to produce a far more complete and comprehensive treatise than exists in the four volumes of *Capital* (counting the *Theories of Surplus Value* as the fourth).

At the Institute of Marxism-Leninism in Moscow, where the manuscript reposes from which, on the basis of much new work done in decyphering it and correcting errors made in the published German edition, the full text now being prepared for English publication will be taken, this work is known as "The First Variant of *Capital*". This is in fact a more accurate description of it. Following its English publication, a further volume containing other "variants of *Capital*" which Marx drafted will be published.

MARX YOUNG AND OLD

There is an interesting identity of view on one issue between David McLellan (in his Introduction to the *Grundrisse* and Istvan Meszaros in his study of "Marx's Theory of Alienation" (the second edition of which was published recently).[6]

The claim has so often been made in recent years that there is a profound rift between the thought and approaches of the young and of the old Marx. Marx the "humanist" is opposed to Marx of the class struggle, Marx the philosopher to Marx the economist. Often it has been maintained that whilst the young Marx centred his thoughts around the concept of alienation, the more mature Marx discarded or neglected this concept. Those who have taken it upon themselves neatly to divide Marx into two or more parts are often deeply divided among themselves, accepting or rejecting different halves of the Marx they have thus divided.

"Their differences", writes Meszaros, "amounted to this, that while the one camp idealised the young Marx and opposed his early manuscripts to his later works, the other only accepted these latter, and dismissed his earlier writing as idealistic".

Both Meszaros and McLellan, of course, accept that it is both possible and desirable to study the development of Marx's thought. What they object to is artificial counterposing and division.

From his special study of the concept of alienation Dr. Meszaros convincingly demonstrates the inaccuracy of such facile division. He shows in great detail, firstly, that Marx did not "drop" the *word* alienation after the *Manuscripts of 1844*, and still less the *concept* itself. On pp. 222-226 he supports this contention with copious quotations from the *Holy Family, German Ideology, Wage, Labour and Capital, Grundrisse, Theories of Surplus Value*, and the three volumes of *Capital*.

McLellan makes the same point arguing it more specifically from his work on the *Grundrisse*. Those who talk of such a "radical

[6] Istvan Meszaros—"Marx's Theory of Alienation", Merlin, cloth £2.25, paperback £1.00.

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break between the young and the old Marx", he writes, "and who do so on the alleged absence in his later writings of the concept of alienation can only make such claims through ignorance or wilful neglect of the *Grundrisse* of 1857-8".

Certainly the translation that he himself has made of roughly one tenth of the total work strongly supports this contention.

LONDON SOLIDARITY WITH THE COMMUNE

The picture on our cover is of a London demonstration in support of the Commune held on April 16th, 1871. It was reported at the time that 30,000-40,000 people gathered in Hyde Park after a march from Clerkenwell Green.

As A. L. Morton explained in his article on "Britain and the Paris Commune", published in our March issue (p. 32), the demonstration was organised by the International Democratic Association.

Although relations had been strained between the International Working Men's Association and this organisation, the IWMA appointed two members of the General Council to speak on its behalf.

The resolution adopted contained greetings to the Communards of Paris:

> "We greet you in the name of the Universal Republic and thank you from the bottom of our heart for the great work that you are carrying out at this time in the name of liberty and for the defence of communal rights.
>
> "We greet you as the pioneers and builders of a new social state, whilst we look on your adversaries, the men of Versailles, as worthy disciples of the man of December, cowardly instruments of the despots of Europe. . . ."

As Morton noted the resolution ended:

> "Our one regret is that our political education on this side of the channel is not yet sufficiently complete to lead us to follow your noble example".

FUTURE ARTICLES AND DISCUSSION

We wrote in our November 1970, Editorial Comments apologising to those authors whose articles and discussion contributions had, for lack of space, been held over.

Since that issue we have published a number of these, but not yet all, and other fresh articles and contributions have been reaching us faster than we can print them, so delays persist.

We wrote then that the discussion on "Why Did it Happen?" was closed to further contributions and that the discussions on "Socialist Democracy" and "Socialism, Democracy and the One-Party System" would be closed to further contributions at the end of January 1971. As the postal strike started in mid-January we had to relax this decision, but further contributions on these issues cannot now be accepted.

We shall, however, continue over the next few months to publish as many as possible of those already received, and rejoinders to all these discussions will be published probably in the June-August issues.

Meanwhile the discussion on "The Strategy of Socialist Revolution in Britain" remains open for contributions of up to 2,000 words.

SUDAN—STOP PRESS

Since the completion of the article "The Crisis in the Sudan" by Joan Shaw published in this issue, we have received news of the release from prison of the Sudanese Communists, including Khalid Mahgoub, the General Secretary of the Sudanese Communist Party.

This has been brought about by the determined activity of the Sudanese Communist Party, the democratic movement inside the country and by representations made to the Sudanese Government by organisations in other countries, including the Communist Party of Great Britain and the National Assembly of Women.

The releases do not yet indicate any general decisions for reversing a drift to the right; neither is there evidence of moves by the Revolutionary Command Council to adjust its relations with the Sudanese Communist Party and mass democratic organisations with a view to developing new forms of democratic unity.

Recent Government changes relating to the Ministry of Planning raise fears of the danger of retreat from the provisions of the Five Year Plan, which the Sudanese Communists, already, believe has serious limitations.

We welcome the release of the Sudanese Communists from prison and hope that differences between the Communist Party and the Revolutionary Command Council will be resolved in a democratic and fraternal way to strengthen the anti-imperialist and revolutionary policies of the Democratic Republic of the Sudan.

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Crisis in the Sudan

Joan Shaw

The political crisis which has been developing in the Republic of the Sudan over the past twelve months, has taken a serious turn for the worse.

On February 13-14th, of this year, at least 84 leading Communists were arrested, among them Central Committee members, the General Secretary of the Sudan Trade Union Federation and the President of the Sudan Women's Association.

The General Secretary, Abdel Khalig Mahgoub, had been arrested earlier, in November 1970, and is still held. At the same time the Revolutionary Command Council removed three of its members, well known for their Left views, and dismissed 13 officers from the army. It was alleged that the officers and Abdel Mahgoub were "engaged in subversive activities inside the armed forces and among trade unionists. These elements later engulfed some Revolutionary Council members, thus gaining access into Council secrets".

When the February arrests were announced, the President, Major-General Nimeiry is reported as alleging that the Communists were sabotaging his regime. He announced that he had taken a capitalist into his Council, declaring "National capital has its role in building up this country. Production is a battle we must win to save our nation from the horrible cruelty of under-development". He exhorted his listeners "You must destroy anyone who claims there is a Sudanese Communist Party. Destroy this alleged Party".

Colonial Heritage

The Sudan carries all the familiar scars of the colonial heritage. The economy is under-developed, dependent on cotton which produces 60 per cent of its foreign earnings. The area of the country is vast, one million square miles, occupied by only 14 million people, whose average per capita income is about £33 per annum.

There are divisive forces arising from racial, religious and social differences. In the Northern Province the people are mainly of Arab stock and make up 39 per cent of the population; also in the region are Negroid and Hamitic tribes who account for a further 21 per cent; a further 30 per cent of Negroid peoples live in the South and the rest are foreigners, mainly from Northern Nigeria.

The Arab-speaking, Muslim peoples are settled farmers and town dwellers, while in the South, the predominantly pagan (under 1 per cent are Christians), Negroes, are pastoral nomads with their own languages.

Under British rule the South was sealed off from the North and the relations between the two areas constitute a serious national problem which imposes severe stresses on the political, economic and military situation of the country.

At independence, in 1956, the main right wing parties were the Umma Party representing, in general, the big landed proprietors, whose relations with the peasantry are semi-feudal, the Peoples' Democratic Party and the National Unionist Party from which the P.D.P. had been formed. The two latter represented the more modern bourgeois classes and merged in 1967 to form the United Democratic Party.

The Communist Party

The Communist Party of the Sudan was founded in 1946. It has deep roots among the working class and other sections of working people. It has worked through and survived, stronger than ever, periods of severe oppression and illegality.

It has constantly deepened and enriched its grasp of Marxism and studied the experiences of the Communist revolutionary movement throughout the world, and it has worked to apply these general laws and experiences to the particular situation of the Sudan. It has never allowed adverse conditions to stampede it into a search for adventurist solutions to problems.

Since its inception it has worked constantly to strengthen the working class movement, organisationally and politically. It has helped to build and to lead the Trade Unions; it is active among the peasantry and seeks constantly to develop a worker-peasant alliance; it has participated in the formation of strong democratic womens', youth and student organisations. Among intellectuals, influential in the professions, there are significant number of Communists as well as radicals.

The unity of these different sections constitutes an important force, which has been regarded as offering the possibility that democratic and socialist advance could be more rapidly achieved in the Sudan than in many other newly independent states where the level of political consciousness is not so high.

In the colonial period the Communist Party worked to build a strong united front for independence. The first conference of the Sudan Trade Union Federation, held in 1951, put forward the demand for independence and established the

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basis for the formation of the United Front for the Liberation of the Sudan.

In 1956, after independence, the Party issued a new programme calling for the establishment of real democracy and for pressure for economic development as the next stage after political independence. While this programme found a response among workers and intellectuals it found little echo among the majority of the population still full of illusions that idependence would spontaneously bring a better life, and still under the influence of bourgeois, semi-feudal, tribal and religious parties.

The political situation was persistently unstable. The Umma Party and the United Democratic Party, whether linked together in temporary and opportunist coalitions, or acting as Government and Opposition, were never capable of solving the pressing problem of economic growth and democratic development. Their periods of office were characterised by political manoeuvring, willing co-operation with neo-colonialism, especially of the United States, corruption, reckless squandering of national resources, political oppression. The daily lives of the people became more and more difficult with rising prices and intensified social problems.

Military Coup of 1958

To economic problems and political unrest, were added the problems of the South with the demand for separation. The outcome was the military coup led by General Ibrahim Abboud in 1958.

The coup was not a transfer of power, it was a political expedient which took the heat off the politicians. That the Sudanese army was not a homogeneous political force is shown by the fact that there were three attempts at military coups in this period against Abboud and his reactionary policies.

Discontent among the people was answered by severe repression. The Communist Party was already illegal from the previous Government but the Trade Unions too were declared illegal by the military regime.

Development aid was accepted from the imperialists which helped to strengthen local capitalist forces. Corruption flourished, middle men sprang up, contact men between government and foreign business firms, speculators in real estate, new forces dependant on neo-colonialist influences found opportunities for growth.

The Abboud Government engaged itself in an attempted military solution of the Southern problem after the failure of political repression and cultural assimilation. In 1963 it faced armed rebellion. Terror against the people resulted in mass emigration and the virtual collapse of the administration. Discontent grew in the army as the prospect of military victory receded and the corruption of the military leadership in Khartoum became evident.

Throughout the country the Civil Service was alienated by the interference of the army officers in administrative matters.

Resistance

The first action came from the students in October 1964. They mounted protests at the conduct of the war in the South. The police attacked them ferociously and the people responded with mass demonstrations. The Trade Unions, the Professionals Front and the Gezira Peasants linked with the students to mount mass demonstrations to make demands for policy changes. The Communists were active among all the four sections. The General Strike for which the Party had been preparing, was called for October 10th. Now the traditional Parties, Umma, NPD, PDP and the Moslem Brotherhood emerged from hiding and entered into negotiations with the Professionals Front.

Abboud Regime Overthrown

This mass pressure precipitated action within the army itself. The young officers joined with the Professionals Front, the Trade Unions and the Communists to force the junta out, but having participated in the overthrow of the Abboud regime, they withdrew, leaving the field to the traditional parties and the Professionals Front.

In the Provisional Government then set up, the Communist Party had one seat in the Cabinet but along with the Professionals Front it was under heavy right wing pressure. In mid-February 1965 the Ansar forces of the Umma Party massed armed tribesmen on Khartoum forcing the resignation of the Prime Minister and a push to the right. The elections held in May on a restricted voting system produced an Umma-NUP coalition, though the Communists polled 73,000 votes compared with 5,000 in 1958.

Reaction Continued

The shift to the right led to the attempt to declare the Communist Party illegal. On December 8th 1965 the Constituent Assembly banned the Party, deprived the 11 Communist deputies of their seats and forbade the dissemination of Marxist ideas. The Party appealed to the courts and in December 1966 the Khartoum High Court declared the Assembly's action illegal.

The decision was greeted by mass demonstrations of support for the Party but the Government tried to find means to evade the Court's decision. It declared its power to amend the interim constitution and filed an appeal to the Court. The Umma Party once more drafted in its armed forces to

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attack the mass demonstrations. The Party replied with the call "Meet Force with Force" and after two or three days the Umma attacks were repulsed.

The effects of these manoeuvres to evade the law, and the show of armed force, exposed the reactionaries as the real threat to legality and democracy.

The Government persisted in its attempts to smash the Party. Abdel Mahgoub and the General Secretary of the Sudan Federation of Trade Unions were arrested and the Party "framed" on a charge of plotting a coup. By now, however, opposition to these manoeuvres was growing and the attempt against the Party collapsed.

Though in practice, the Party did not emerge into full legality, the struggle for the Court's decision was important. It was a partial victory for the democratic and socialist forces of the Sudan and it created the conditions for resisting the destruction of the Party, which the reactionaries were working for. The Party has still not emerged from this legal "twilight". Technically illegal, it has conducted open activity, always with a threat hanging over it.

The Government failed to bring about a settlement in the South, economic difficulties grew, pressures were growing for the Islamic Constitution. The 1967 elections produced the defeat of the Umma Party which split into two factions led by the Imam and by his nephew Saddiq. The United Democratic Party formed a Government but was incapable of moving out of the political and economic impasse facing the country.

On May 25th, 1969 the army officers overthrew the Government.

Army Coup 1969

These were not the senior, reactionary officers of 1958, supporters of Abboud, but the more junior ranks. They included Nationalist, Arab Socialist and Communist officers.

For the second time in 13 years of independence the army had moved onto the forefront of the political stage. Traditionally, military coups have been merely a means of passing Government office from one Party to another, or holding the ring for the politicians, but today there are factors tending to produce new types of army officers and new types of coups. Where officers are being increasingly drawn from petty bourgeois sections as distinct from the old feudal and bourgeois classes, some respond actively to the pressure of the democratic forces for change and against neo-colonialist domination. Coups by this type of officer can be the basis for the transfer of power from the old traditional classes to the new democratic classes.

The Sudanese Communist Party described the army as follows:

> "The majority of the soldiers and the NCO's come from among the toiling masses and are, therefore, against imperialism and have a vested interest in leading our country along a progressive path.
>
> "Most of the officers are educated petty-bourgeoisie".

The Revolutionary Command Council invited a number of civilians, in their personal capacity to take office. They included three civilian Communists. (This brought the total of Communists in the Government to five).

The Communists, who had been approached about the coup before it took place, thought the time was not opportune because the mass movement was not rising. They believed a coup should be the culmination of a growing mass struggle leading to a change of power and not merely a device for solving contradictions within the existing political situation.

This view did not prevent them offering support for the new Government when the coup was launched.

National Charter

The Revolutionary Command Council moved rapidly with a series of policy statements, including a key declaration on the South. The Five Year Plan and the National Charter were published in 1970. The Charter is a statement of general principles and an outline of policy for immediate implementation.

It seems to be a concensus document, clear on aspects of policy which command the support of all the national, democratic sections, less precise on other problems such as the relation of classes, the structure of the army and production relations. It should be said here, that contrary to what President Nimeiry implied, when he announced that he was taking a capitalist into his Cabinet, the Sudanese Communists recognise that at this stage of development there is a part for national, progressive capitalists to play in development. Unfortunately the particular capitalist referred to is a member of the most reactionary Umma Party!

The Charter outlines a programme of economic development, freeing the economy from foreign domination in trade and banking, encouraging the growth of a co-operative, a state-private, and a public sector. It proposes to eliminate the middle man from agriculture, by developing marketing boards, and plans the introduction of modern techniques and diversification of products. It proposes investment in industry to produce import substitutes and to process agricultural and other local produce. The public sector will develop most markedly in prospecting and mining.

The Southern Programme is re-affirmed along

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the lines of the principles stated only 14 days after the overthrow of Abboud:

> "The revolutionary government is confident and must face realities. It recognises the historical and cultural differences between the North and South and firmly believes that the unity of our country must be built upon these objective realities. The Southern people have the right to develop their respective cultures and traditions within a united socialist Sudan".

The material basis for the autonomy of the South within the Sudanese Republic is to be established by special provisions for investment, to develop agriculture and industry, to speed the education of Southerners to enable them to participate in Government and administration more effectively and to assist in the resettlement of those who fled the country under the stress of the armed uprising and the previous Government's policy.

Joseph Garang, a well-known Communist, himself a Southerner, with a fine record of political struggle on behalf of the people of the South, is the Minister.

The Revolutionary Command Council extended diplomatic recognition to the German Democratic Republic, North Korea and North Vietnam. It outlined an anti-imperialist foreign policy of close relations with the socialist states, and for active participation in the struggles against imperialism.

The Charter on Democracy

For a newly independent country like the Sudan, which has suffered from political repression under colonialism, and after independence, the democratic nature of the political system is very important. The Charter denounces the corruption of previous regimes and the way in which reactionary forces utilised the forms of bourgeois democracy to deny real democracy to the mass of the people:

> "The May Revolution has rejected this counterfeit democracy which has served as a tool of reactionary and colonial repression in the country. The May Revolution has thrown overboard all of the institutions of that democracy which have tampered with and abused the affairs of the people from the village up to the central authority. The Revolution has decisively and determinedly affected all that, in order to inaugurate a new democracy that decrees the vesting of all power in the hands of the working classes of our people so that these extensive forces can practise and enjoy the whole of their freedom and be the masters of their own destiny.
>
> "*The means for realising this objective:*
>
> (a) the setting up (of) the political Organisation within whose ambit should be incorporated all of the forces of the Revolution with no room for the enemies of the Revolution. These forces shall assume, through their roles in leadership, political, social and economic guidance from the basic unit (the village) right up to the top (in the political authority).
>
> (b) Democratisation of the state apparatus and transforming it for the benefit of the masses by exclusion of corrupt elements who are opposed to the process of change and by repealing all legislation that has alienated the hierarchy of the state from the masses, and by promulgating new legislation that would protect the masses from the oppression by the hierarchy and would goad the state apparatus itself out of the bureaucracy and the state of seclusion that it has succumbed to.
>
> (c) Vesting the institutions of local government without any reservations, in the hands of the Revolutionary masses. In this regard there should be no susceptibility to the teachings of liberal democracy that would swing the doors wide open for the infiltration of these institutions by reactionary elements.
>
> (d) Representing the workers in the governing bodies of the various units of production in both the public and private sectors and to enact special legislation to secure for the workers their right to elect their own representatives."

Pressure on the Communist Party

There are obvious weaknesses in comprehensive, omnibus statements like the National Charter, often impeccable in their expression of general sentiments, but capable of differing interpretations in practical life.

While the discussions on the Charter were proceeding, new pressures were being placed on the Communist Party, which was still not given legal existence. The Revolutionary Command Council was hoping the Party would voluntarily liquidate itself, to make way for the formation of what the Charter terms, "the political Organisation within whose ambit should be incorporated all the forces of the Revolution".

A minority of the Party, Central Committee and Ministers was for this. A special Conference of the Party was convened in August 1970 and took the decision to maintain the independent existence of the Party, by a more than four to one vote.

The Party's Attitude

The main political resolution *The Present Political Situation and the Tactics of the Communist Party of the Sudan* formulated the Party's attitude to the present political stage and to the Revolutionary Command Council itself.

> "As the present political regime represents a section of the national democratic forces in our country, there is now a practical possibility for the implementation of portions of the programme of the democratic revolution. On this assumption and by force of a successful struggle on all ideological, political and economic fronts, it is possible to

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implement the programme of the current stage in its entirety. *It has, therefore, become imperative for the Communist Party to commit itself to this task in all spheres of action: to mobilise the masses, organise them, and uplift their struggle to a level compatible with the demands of such a task*". (Author's italics) . . . "As the state power is now in the hands of the progressive petty-bourgeoisie, an intermediary stage in the development of our revolution has been created. The attitude of the Communist Party towards the regime is, therefore, based on the following:

1. Alliance and support in face of imperialist and reactionary interference in all its forms: aggressive and violent or elusive and non-violent.
2. Unwavering struggle to make this alliance an effective means of spreading among the masses the objectives of Revolution and eliciting their active participation in the achievement of the National Democratic Front and its government.
3. Thus any joint action between the CP and this regime is in fact based on the programme of the democratic revolution. This means encouragement and support for all positive steps taken in that direction and active struggle against any negative steps that deprive the revolutionary masses of the tools necessary for effecting this programme.
4. A necessary pre-requisite, not only for the success of this intermediary stage but also for the very existence of the regime itself, is the complete abandonment of all anti-Communist policies. The revolutionary masses in our country are not numerous, but they are capable of leading our whole country along the course of progress *if* they were unified and stood against any policy of antagonism and discrimination."

Five Year Plan

Differences between the Revolutionary Command Council and the Sudanese Party have developed, not so much around immediate policies, but around the problem of translating them into dynamic, political reality and this in turn revolves around the problem of democracy and the role of the working class.

The Sudanese Communists have been concerned to examine the day to day political situation and, in the light of declared policy, work to develop the political forces which can give the cutting edge to the programme of the national democratic stage of the revolution.

Specific examples of the differences in emphasis will illustrate the nature of the problem.

Introducing the Five Year Plan, President Nimeiry said it had the following main aims:

"To:

1. Achieve the country's economic independence by liberating the Sudanese economy from foreign domination in strategic sectors such as that of trade, banking and insurance. This is what we have actually done in recent days.
2. Broaden the base of the public sector and consolidate its role as a pioneer in all fields of production.
3. Encourage the co-operative sector and widen the zone of its activities.
4. Stimulate and invigorate the mixed sector.
5. Motivate the private sector so as to perform its role in those spheres spotlighted by the development plan.
6. Spur an agricultural, industrial and urbanised revolution in the country and the transforming of the existing production relations into socialist relations especially in the spheres of agriculture.
7. Lift the cultural and intellectual level of Sudanese citizens by providing cultural and intellectual facilities through the media of education and its development".

In spite of the declaration in item 6, which for the Sudan ought to be a key aim, there is no proposal to change production relations in the Five Year Plan. It concentrates mainly on increasing output. The most it proposes is co-operative forms of production with state farms as experimental stations. There are no proposals which would change the position of tribal leaders or large scale landowners:

"The 5-year plan does not change the basis of backward relations of production (the pre-capitalist relations). Nor does it tackle the question of non-capitalist development in agriculture. These relations still stand on pure capitalist relations in the modern sector".

Communist August Resolution

While the Revolutionary Command Council tends to present its programme as a programme for the building of socialism (omitting the most fundamental question of which class holds political power), the August Resolution has a more sober estimate. It says that if the plan is successfully achieved, having incorporated suggestions from the working people it will achieve the following:

"1. Putting an end to the economic decline inherited from the ex-regime.
2. Creating the necessary apparatus for leading the subsequent reconstruction of the national economy.
3. Increasing the weight of the public sector in the reconstruction of our economy on a non-capitalist basis.
4. Improving the standard of living of our people to a certain degree.
5. Promoting commercial, economic and political relations with the Socialist bloc to a level that warrants a standing alliance. This would facilitate the non-capitalist development of our country, and have a positive influence on the progress of the regime along the revolutionary democratic course".

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Educational Problems

A second example is the difference of approach on the educational problems facing the country. The National Charter proposes the extension of education "to reach all citizens" and an education "tied with the plan of development and the objectives of the Revolution and the type which spreads the positive virtues and ensures the human ideals and raises the technical and trade abilities".

These seem laudable aims but it is the August Resolution which deals sharply with the problem. The following estimate illustrates the different quality of the two approaches to the practical questions of translating the national democratic revolution into everyday life!

> "As regards the cultural revolution stemming from the national democratic phase, the fundamental principles guiding this question are incorrect:
>
> 1. All efforts have been confined to formal schooling. Popular culture, eradication of illiteracy, and the renaissance which reflects the cultural treasures of our people and combats traditional influences—all these have been utterly neglected.
>
> 2. The educational effort does not aim at the democratisation of it insofar as compulsory education is concerned nor its direction towards the children of the toilers. Judging by the existing measures, we shall need more than 38 years to admit all children at the primary level.
>
> 3. The educational system is divorced from the 5 year plan and from any forthcoming revolution."

Constructive Criticism

It is probably difficult for the Command Council, army officers unaccustomed to criticism to believe that the points being raised by the Communists are not aimed at destroying their achievements, but the consistent participation by the Party in all the great campaigns of the Sudanese people testify to their devotion and sincerity.

The November Appeal from the Central Committee "To The Masses of the Sudanese People" issued in connection with Mahgoub's arrest, stresses that the Party is concerned to strengthen the application of policy and is in no way "destructive" as the communiqué of the Revolutionary Command Council suggests.

> "As far as the economic field is concerned, the revolutionary movement, in the vanguard of which is the Communist Party, has been exerting serious effort in co-operation with the Authority to improve the state of performance of the nationalised and confiscated corporations, which have been suffering from many drawbacks such as faulty organisation and the weak administration which constitute a threat to their future. These corporations are in need of a re-organisation so as to ensure a better performance and a higher return to the benefit of the national income. The Communist Party and all the revolutionary forces have put the question of the 5 Year Plan at the head of the daily and urgent tasks, and a wide mass movement has been stirred up among the workers for this purpose.
>
> "Our people have not ceased to show their concern and anxiety as to the future of the revolution as a result of the high cost of living, the failure of the administrative methods taken to solve the problem, the instability of prices and the anarchy of the market which led to the increased tightness of the financial situation. *The Party, in co-operation with the trade union movement, continued to raise their practical proposals to the Authority for overcoming these difficulties and for depriving of strength the counter-revolutionary forces which are enhancing their activities from the chance to make use of the discontent of the masses in achieving their aims.*" (Author's italics).

Why the Attack on the Communists?

Differences about economic and educational policies or the problems of the South, serious as they are, are not the essence of the difficulty now existing between the Revolutionary Command Council and the Sudanese Communist Party. The pivot of the crisis is the role of the working class and its political party, the Communist Party.

There are external factors influencing President Nimeiry in his attempts to liquidate the Party. The Alliance with Egypt, Libya and, subsequently Syria, may well carry with it undertakings to suppress the Communist Party, under pressure, especially from some circles in Egypt.

The November Appeal directly links the Triple Alliance (as it was then), with the arrest of Mahgoub:

> "As to what was happening within our country, a large part of our people were anxiously considering the pact of the Triple Alliance, which was not submitted to popular discussion so that the masses might express their will. The matter was made more obscure as a result of the official statements and those of the press, which helped to strengthen the belief of the masses that a plot is in process of being hatched, and a serious danger threatens the march of the Sudanese revolution and its democratic movement.
>
> "Our people have been regarding with concern and distrust the mounting activity of the Egyptian official organs in the Sudan, especially their Intelligence Service, which aims at strengthening the rightist trend and exercising its black methods in sabotaging the revolutionary movement in our country under the pretext of checking the communist influence. The unity of the National Security Organs and the reconsideration of the question of the mass organisations in the three countries are included in the Pact of the Triple Union".

The February arrests of the 84 Communists and the November arrest of Mahgoub and dismissals of officers had been preceded already in April

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by the arrest of Mahgoub and his deportation to Egypt. The Revolutionary Command Council appears to want the experience and skill and dedication of Communists at its disposal but it resists the Communist Party. There were by April, divisions within the Party about the maintenance of its independent existence, but the Revolutionary Command Council seemed to be under the impression that the personal influence of the General Secretary alone, stood as an obstacle to their hopes for the Party's voluntary liquidation. This explains the arrest and deportation.

It was not, contrary to their expectations followed by the emergence of a majority on the Central Committee for dissolution. On the contrary, there were growing mass protests and demonstrations demanding the return of Mahgoub. It is said that the late President Nasser was unaware of Mahgoub's deportation to Egypt and took vigorous measures, when he found out, to insist on the General Secretary's repatriation. Mahgoub returned, the struggle within the Party continued and was finally settled at the August Party Conference.

One-Party System or National Democratic Front?

The Revolutionary Command Council wants to create a one-party system embracing all sections of the national democratic forces in the country. The Communist Party, in line with all its previous programmes, believes that a National Democratic Front corresponds to the present historical stage:

> "The National Democratic Front is a standing and obligatory tactic of the national democratic revolution. It is, in effect, the expression of alliance among the social forces of this revolution. Hence, the National Democratic Front links up with and ends with the end of this stage. When a country enters the socialist stage, new alliances arise, suited to the nature of the new situation. The Front is, therefore, not a mere organisational form (as) this is governed by various characteristics of our country that need to be understandingly and flexibly taken into account.
>
> "The one-party system, even if it were the Communist Party itself, does not provide the appropriate form for the alliance of the democratic stage because, strictly speaking, any party should necessarily have a unity of ideology and action manifested in a unified programme and a uniform pattern of internal organisation true to the ideology of a particular class. No party can tolerate or harbour heterogeneous ideologies of factions. The programme and charter of the Communist Party, for instance, are drawn from the ideology of the working class. A dissenting ideology within the party would promptly lead to a conflict over the supremacy of one of the two ideologies. This is true of any other party.
>
> "Therefore, the one-party system at the national democratic stage of the revolution in our country with all its national, tribal, socio-political characteristics, as well as its class differences, does not provide a tool capable of the unification of these classes in favour of the fulfilment of the current tasks of the revolution. Adoption of any one party to play this role would only result in the scattering of the forces of the revolution and consequently failure to implement the tasks of the stage fully and precisely.
>
> "The NDF, therefore, constitutes the organisation and political alliance of the working class, peasantry, revolutionary intellectuals, national bourgeoisie, revolutionary officers and soldiers—an alliance based on a national democratic programme expressing the common interest and commitment of these classes. In order that this alliance should stand on a firm basis, the *independence* of its various components *must be* safeguarded". (pp. 5 and 6—*The August Resolution*).

Role of the Working Class

It is the working class playing an independent role in the working for the policy of the National Democratic Revolution which is the strongest force. The objective needs of the class, *as a class*, require the abolition of exploitation and the building of a democratic and socialist society.

It is the class whose short and long term interests correspond most closely to the programme of ending exploitation both by foreign and native capital and whose social cohesion, and role in key areas of production, makes it, under the leadership of a Communist Party, the most powerful force for democratic and socialist advance. To subordinate the working class and its party to a political organisation, dominated by the petty bourgeoisie, is to place it under the leadership of a class which is not socially cohesive, but anarchic, which vacillates between the desire to throw off capitalist exploitation and to join the capitalists' ranks, which has no unifying, scientific ideology of revolution.

The working class, independent of tribal and semi-feudal forces, experienced in organisation, situated in key areas of the economy, as opposed to the dispersal and disunity inherent in much of peasant and petty bourgeois life, is the political rock upon which the leadership of the national democratic revolution should build. To attempt to smash the Communist Party is to try to destroy the most stable and powerful force opposed to imperialism and to the opponents, internally, of the new Government.

Dangers from the Right

The Revolutionary Command Council has already experienced the vacillation and passivity of the rural petty bourgeoisie. When President Nimeiry made his visit to areas of traditional support for

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the Umma Party in April 1970, there were those who were already suggesting that in the newly independent, economically under-developed countries, it is the peasantry which will play the leading role in revolution. The acid test of the theory came as the President travelled down the White Nile, and the Umma wing led by the Imam Al Hadi, spiritual head of the Mahdi sect, launched armed attacks against him. The Imam demanded the resignation of the Army Government and the rescinding of all measures it had taken since its advent. While workers and students demonstrated in Khartoum, demanding arms to defend the revolution, the peasants in the White Nile region failed to rally to Nimeiry and were, at best, passive.

The rebellion was smashed by the army but the forces of the right still retain a strong material and political and religious base in the rural areas.

If the present Government is to carry through its programme it will meet with sharper resistance from reactionary forces; it will need the full power of the organised working class to defend it in unity with all the other democratic sections.

Problems of Military Governments

A programme of reforms and developments in the interests of the working class and working people, but ushered in, controlled, and administered on their behalf by a paternalist state apparatus, is doomed to failure. It is not possible to smash the power of neo-colonialism, and its internal class allies, while excluding the working people and their political parties and democratic organisations from the arena of struggle. Progress is not brought down as a gift from on high, it is built by struggle, and the forces for bringing about such revolutionary change are themselves continuously formed and re-formed in the course of that struggle. Any attempt to exclude them from exerting political power, as distinct from being allowed and expected to participate in reforms, and lift productivity, will result in passivity, and in the undermining penetration of the Government by the old ruling class.

> "It is impossible for the state power to protect itself against the attacks of reaction and imperialism and to safeguard the forward march of the revolution without the support of these formidable revolutionary battalions. The description of the Communist Party and its honest leadership, which has been loyal to its country and its people as 'destructive' can be met by the Party only by a flat rejection. It is a slander against our clear and long standing struggles in the service of the Sudanese revolution and in the service of our working people. It is an open invitation to the traditional forces to continue their activities overtly or covertly against the Communist Party". (*November Appeal.*)

Military Governments always face the problem of how to rule. The army is not a political organisation and a Government of progressive officers is liable to find problems on the morrow of the revolution.

The late President Nasser of Egypt vividly described this in his own country.

> "The leaders accomplished their mission. They stormed the strongholds of oppression, dethroned the despot and stood, awaiting the holy march in close orderly ranks to the great goal.
>
> "They waited long, however. The masses did come, but how different is fiction from facts. The masses did come. But they came struggling in scattered groups. The Holy March to the Great Goal was halted, and the picture in those days looked dark, dastardly and foreboding. It was then that I realised with an embittered heart torn with grief that the vanguard's mission did not end at that hour. It had just begun". ("The Philosophy of Revolution". *World Marxist Review*, No. 8, 1966.)

In the Sudan there is no such political vacuum, but if the Communist Party is prevented from participating in the struggle for the new programme a dangerous political vacuum will be created which places the future of the national, democratic revolution in jeopardy.

Solidarity

Can Communist Parties in other countries contribute to the resolving of the crisis? The main responsibility for that rests, of course, with the Sudanese people, and no one wants to interfere in their internal affairs.

We have, however, obligations of solidarity towards our comrades when they are arbitrarily arrested. When the arrest of Abdel Mahgoub was announced last November, the General Secretary of the Communist Party of Great Britain immediately wrote to President Nimeiry, appealing for his release and, outlining the enormous contribution of the Sudanese Communist Party to the struggles of Sudan for liberation, and said:

> "We have no desire to interfere in the Sudan's internal affairs, but we consider that it is the inalienable right of the working class in any country to establish its own political party based on Marxism-Leninism, and that the maintenance or otherwise of such a Party must be the free decision of the appropriate working class itself. We can never agree that a Communist Party should be restricted or denied legal existence by the government.
>
> "We are as anxious as the Sudanese Government that your country should prosper and make progress and that the remnants of imperialism and backwardness should be overcome. It is precisely for these reasons that we are raising with you the question of the arrest of Abdel Khalig Mahgoub, and that we urge his immediate release. We believe that this

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would be in the best interests of the Republic of the Sudan".

The situation, since then, has worsened.

For a Principled Solution

The Republic of the Sudan has taken steps to strengthen itself in the anti-imperialist struggle by developing diplomatic relations with more socialist states, by establishing new economic relations and by accepting Socialist economic aid. It has new important anti-imperialist links with the working class states, but clamps down on the party of its own working class at home.

There are Governments in some of the Middle East states which have tried to suppress their own Communist Parties while developing ties with socialist states, which plead a kind of exceptionalist theory relating to their own parties. Communists in the socialist countries and even elsewhere are acceptable but they suggest that "their" Communists are especially difficult and unco-operative, even disruptive.

State and party relations are of course, separate questions and state relations do not depend on the character of internal political systems, but on the other hand, the requirements of state and diplomatic relations must not submerge the need for solidarity between Communists everywhere in the world.

The Sudanese crisis is serious both for the people of the Sudan and for the perspective of the national democratic revolution in other parts of the world. There is a basis for resolving the differences between the Revolutionary Command Council and the Sudanese Communist Party in a principled and fraternal way. Differences and persecution will only strengthen the forces of reaction; the resolving of the problems with the immediate release of the imprisoned Communists will put new impetus in the struggle of the Sudanese people for their advance to democracy, economic development and a socialist future.

Brecht and a 'Unity of Opposites'

Ann Gray

"The time has passed when a reproduction of the world by means of theatre need only be capable of being experienced. To be an experience it needs to be accurate. . . . There are not so many who realise the increasing difficulty of reproducing the present-day world. . . . However, one thing has become quite plain: the present-day world can only be described to present-day people if it is described as capable of transformation".

These words, written by Bertolt Brecht in an article entitled "Can the Present-day World be Reproduced by Means of Theatre" (1955)[1], immediately pinpoint Brecht's reaction against the "orthodox" theatre of his day, and also make explicit the motivation behind Brecht's content and form as a dramatist: the world should be described as "capable of transformation". According to Brecht the "orthodox" theatre achieved quite the reverse:

> "—Exhausted
> By the unceasing struggles of their daily life they await with greed
> Just what repels the others. A little message
> For their flaccid spirits. A little tautening
> Of slackened nerves. Easy adventure, a sense of magic hands
> Bearing them off from a world they cannot master
> And have to give up".[2]

Alienation Effect

Thus the mystery and magic of theatre allowed the audience to sit back passively and escape into a world of fantasy, or, alternatively, the audience identification with the action on stage purged the audience of any desire to take action for themselves outside the theatre. For centuries a motivating force behind the theatre had been Aristotle's "catharsis" (or purging of the emotions), and it

[1] "*Brecht on Theatre*"—Translated by John Willett (A Dramabook: Hill and Wang, New York)—p. 275. Willett notes that the article was "Written in 1955, to be read as a contribution to the Fifth 'Darmstadter Gesprach', a discussion on theatrical problems held at Darmstadt (West Germany). Published in 'Sonntag' (Berlin GDR) May 8th, 1955, and in draft form in 'Sinn und Form' 1955, No. 2".

[2] "*The Theatre of Bertolt Brecht*"—by John Willett (Methuen: A University Paperback)—p. 166; Chapter 6: "The Theory". The poem was written in 1934.

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was against this "Aristotelian" theatre that Brecht evolved his "Epic" theatre: "The essential point of the epic theatre is perhaps that it appeals less to the feelings than to the spectator's reason. Instead of sharing an experience the spectator must come to grips with things. . . ."[3] This purpose is made clear in play after play, thus in the Prologue to his one-act "The Exception and the Rule", Brecht writes:

> "—Observe the conduct of these people closely:
> Find it estranging even if not very strange
> Hard to understand even if it is the rule
> Observe the smallest action, seeming simple,
> With mistrust.
> Inquire if a thing be necessary
> Especially if it is common
> We particularly ask you—
> When a thing continually occurs—
> Not on that account to find it natural.
> Let nothing be called natural
> In an age of bloody confusion
> Ordered disorder, planned caprice,
> And dehumanised humanity, lest all things
> Be held unalterable!"[4]

It is this which Brecht called *Verfremdungseffekt* or "alienation effect"—a technical device which both broke the illusion of theatre, *and* produced critical detachment in the audience, thus forcing them to sit back from the action on stage and think and judge for themselves—only then could theatre become a powerful instrument of change and transformation. The foundations of this technique were laid in 1926—only a few months after Brecht had spent the summer studying "Capital". In opposition to the society and theatre around him, Brecht brought to bear a scientific approach which he applied to both society and theatre: "alienation" became a technical instrument for a scientific analysis of society, and of theatrical effect and effectiveness.

Thus "alienation" was a technical means of communicating a dialectical approach and analysis, and of representing a situation in all its complex and often contradictory nature; and it became a dramatic technique in its own right—though never for its own sake. The purpose behind the approach to both form and content was identical: given that Brecht wanted not only to interpret but also to change the world,[5] the techniques which he evolved allowed him to show both the need for a changed world, and the possibilities for that change; the desire in people to live decently, and the pressures which result in them behaving badly. In his "Short Organum of Theatre"[6] Brecht quotes Lenin:

> "It is impossible to recognise the various happenings in the world in their independence of movement, their spontaneity of development, their vitality of being, without recognising them as a unity of opposites".

Brecht, therefore, combined a Marxist analysis of society with his artistic purpose in the theatre: he represented social and political conflicts and contradictions on his stage by means of a technique and form which not only allowed the dramatisation of these contradictions, but which was in itself a scientific use of theatre. In this way he dramatised the "unity of opposites"; and to this end he brought together many diverse effects and wove them into a unique style—a style which allowed of a freedom in the theatre virtually unknown in European drama since the Elizabethan stage.

Epic and Aristotelian

Brecht himself laid out a table in which he illustrates clearly the major differences between his "Epic" theatre, and the "Aristotelian" theatre, from which sixteen of the nineteen points are quoted:[7]

Aristotelian	*Epic*
Plot	Narrative
implicates spectator in a stage situation	turns spectator into an observer, but
wears down his capacity for action	arouses his capacity for for action
provides him with sensations	forces him to take decisions
. . . .	. . . .
the spectator is involved in something	he is made to face something
suggestion	argument

[3] "*The Theatre of Bertolt Brecht*"—by John Willett (Methuen: A University Paperback)—p. 168; Chapter 6: "The Theory". Brecht wrote these words in November, 1927.

[4] "*The Exception and the Rule*"—The Prologue—Translated by Eric Bentley (Published by Blackie & Son Limited, in a collection of short plays called "Spotlight"). The play was written by Brecht in 1930.

[5] "—I wanted to apply to the theatre the saying that one should not only interpret but change the world"—Brecht. Translated by Darko Suvin in "*The Mirror and The Dynamo*" "On Brecht's Aesthetic Point of View"—by Darko Suvin (Published in "The Drama Review", New York University, USA in Fall, 1967. No. T37.)

[6] "*Brecht on Theatre*"—Translated by John Willett (A Dramabook: Hill and Wang, New York)—p. 281; "Appendices to the Short Organum of Theatres—Appendix 73. "A Short Organum for the Theatre" was written in 1948, but the date of the Appendices is uncertain.

[7] "*Brecht on Theatre*"—Translated by John Willett (A Dramabook: Hill and Wang, New York)—p. 37: "The Modern Theatre is the Epic Theatre"—Brecht's "Notes to the Opera" "The Rise and Fall of the City of Mahagonny", 1930.

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instinctive feelings preserved	brought to the point of recognition
the spectator is in the thick of it, shares the experience	the spectator stands outside, studies
the human being is taken for granted	the human being is the object of the enquiry
he is unalterable	he is alterable and able to alter
eyes on the finish	eyes on the course
one scene makes another	each scene for itself
growth	montage
....	....
....	....
man as a fixed point	man as a process
thought determines being	social being determines thought
feeling	reason

The emphasis throughout is on man's ability to change his situation and his nature, but only if he is forced to stand back objectively from the action taking place on stage, and think for himself. Nothing must be taken for granted, and the audience must never forget that they are in a theatre. These are, perhaps, the over-riding factors in Brecht's theories, and the practice, as seen in his plays and productions, is largely dictated by them.

Clear and Understandable

Brecht threw out the Aristotelian concept of the unities of time, place, and action which had for so long limited the possibilities of dramatic construction and theatrical techniques.[8] Thus the action of Brecht's plays was allowed to move forwards, backwards, and even be repeated in time, so providing a kind of multi-vision of one action which could be represented by different people either by enactment, or by narration—and this, of course, provided the kind of time-movement and fluidity which we today are used to finding in the cinema.

By moving freely from place to place in the course of one play, Brecht was able to illustrate simultaneous action which often reinforced the point of the scene or play by allowing rapid juxtaposition (or montage), and the contrast and conflict so essential to his purpose. By liberating his actors from the conventions of the proscenium stage, and the built-up set, the actors were able to step out of their parts, speak to the audience direct, comment on the roles they were playing, and the motivation of the character, and even tell the audience what would happen next.

Since Brecht's primary concern was that the "sense of magic hands" at work in the theatre should be destroyed, nothing should be mysterious or magical—everything should be immediately clear and understandable. Thus the stage could be divided up into different places or areas, and the audience would understand, by a comment from the actor, or by a poster, or slide-projection, that one area was a courtyard, and another, a battle-field, and so on. This did away with the often cumbersome scenery of the conventional "fourth-wall" staging; it allowed the action to progress and alter with much greater speed and therefore effect, and it also placed the audience in a new relation to what they saw on stage: in other words, the audience had sometimes to fill in the "context" for themselves.

Instead of the detailed scenery and props. found on the conventional (or as Brecht would put it, Aristotelian) stage, the Brechtian stage is often bare—perhaps a chair, a table, a few shelves to indicate a shop, and the rest is up to the audience. Thus Brecht would indicate just enough to allow the audience to recognise the scene or place—yet not enough to make it too familiar.

In addition, this technique—which allowed only the essentials—enabled the correct emphasis to be placed on an object or the actor: the cart in "Mother Courage" dominates the whole stage—it is the only object on the stage apart, perhaps from a representational tree; the telescope in Galileo's room is not lost amidst a welter of scenic detail. Thus, whereas on the "conventional" stage emphasis can only be achieved by the correct placing of an object amongst other objects, or by its colour, on the Brechtian stage the object does not have to compete with a full and detailed set. An object or prop. had to be clearly visible to the audience, and its significance immediately recognisable.

Brecht's Stage

The wealth and freedom which this kind of staging provides is easily apparent: a cart can become a symbol for a whole play ("Mother Courage"); a water-flask and a gun, placed on opposite sides of an otherwise bare stage, can tell more about their respective owners than a stage-full of detail ("The Exception and the Rule"); a cane can be used as a walking-stick, a telescope, an umbrella, a spear, and so on. This freedom owes a great deal to both the Elizabethan theatre—and to Chinese theatre. Thus a great journey can be indicated simply by the actor marching on the spot; a piece of cloth can become a river; and a great battle can be enacted by two actors ("The Horations and the Curatians"). In this sort of theatre, anything is possible—and everything is clear to the audience.

Equally, Brecht did not want "mysterious" and absorbing lighting effects: instead, he asked for bright, white lighting, in which everything was

[8] Brecht was not, of course, the first to dispose of the "three unities". Strindberg and Jarry, for example, had done this at the turn of the century.

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equally revealed, and which would never be more interesting in itself than the action and people it was designed to light. This is not a theatre, which plays with shadows or "trick" effects: any reaction and thought from the audience must come from what the actors do and say—and not from the lighting effects. In the Berliner Ensemble production of "Arturo Ui"[9] one lot of gangsters wait in a garage for another gang: the stage is almost dark, until, suddenly, "car-lamps" are switched on. This is effective, but not so effective that we lose interest in the action, or forget the situation.

Thus Brecht's theatre is highly effective—yet effects in lighting and staging are subordinated to the needs of the scene or play, and to the immediate comprehension of the audience. Brecht's theatre is extremely clear and simple—yet this simplicity demands from the audience a willingness to speak the same language and to think things out, and fill things in, for themselves. In the modern theatre mystery is easily achieved, but can too readily exist for its own sake, but simplicity is often hard to achieve—and has a purpose beyond itself.

The Audience Judges

This absence of mystery in Brecht's theatre manifests itself in the technique of the writing, as well as of production and performance. Thus, in play after play ("The Caucasian Chalk Circle"; "The Good Person of Szechwan"; "The Trial of Lucullus"; "The Exception and the Rule" etc.) there is a "trial" scene, or court scene. Leaving aside its dramatic value, such scenes also provide an opportunity for motivation, points of view, and situation, to be clearly communicated to the audience, and yet add up to considerable complexity. In numerous plays this scene becomes a centre-piece for the ideas and thoughts found elsewhere in the play. It can be a climax—and yet is often anti-climatic. It can be a climax in that the actions within the play have made it either inevitable or necessary; it can be anti-climatic in that the audience sometimes knows beforehand what the judgment will be; or because the audience has been made aware that the judgment will be irrelevant to the situation ("The Good Person of Szechwan"); or because the audience has understood, by that point in the play, that a certain judgment is inevitable under certain conditions ("The Exception and the Rule").

Justice, therefore, is described as either irrelevant or unjust: either way, it is the inevitable result of a specific cause. But even more important, such court or trial scenes place the audience in the position of judges. The audience is more objective than the judges on stage: the audience sees the defendant and the prosecutor, the witnesses, and the judge, and understands the motivation of all of them. In addition, the audience has often seen, earlier in the play, the very actions which are being narrated in court.

In an early play, "The Decision"[10], Brecht starts the play with the court scene: we first see the "court" (played by the Chorus) to whom the four political agitators report their killing of a young comrade who had accompanied them to China. They then act out, before the court, what happened in China—and both the court and the audience see the actions for the first and only time. This method, however, is less common in Brecht's later work: in the later plays we hear of things we have already seen, and we hear many views and interpretations of one action or situation. Either way, the audience must decide and judge.

Without an Ending

Such decisions also concern the ending of a play. In a number of plays Brecht simply does not provide "an ending" as such: again, the audience must think out the possible resolution of a problem, or how a judgement can be reversed, or a situation changed. Thus, "Mother Courage" does not finish after Scene 12. The set of Scene IJ has been cleared away (a bit of a wall and a stable with a roof), and Mother Courage pulls her waggon off an empty stage, but—as Brecht writes[11]—"The act of dragging the waggon off . . . took place on a completely empty stage: whereby one remembered the setting of the first scene. Courage and her waggon moved in a complete circle on the revolving stage. . . . As usual, the stage was bathed in light". Thus the last scene is as the first scene—the only difference is that this time Courage pulls the waggon alone, and we know *why* she pulls it by herself; and we know that she will go on pulling it for just as long as war lasts. The only "ending" for this situation is to have no wars—and no profiteers.

In "The Good Person of Szechwan" this absence of an "ending" is made explicit. John Willett outlines the plot: "To justify their existence, the gods have to produce a good person. They choose Shen Teh, a penniless prostitute and set her up in a tobacconist's shop, and watch her progress. She finds that she cannot remain good and survive. She disguises herself as a man (her supposed cousin Shui Ta) who has the necessary ruthlessness to put order in her affairs".[12] At the end of the

[9] "*The Resistable Rise of Arturo Ui*", written in 1941. Performed by the Berliner Ensemble at the National Theatre, London, in 1965.

[10] "*The Decision*"—a one-act play first produced in 1930.

[11] "*Bertolt Brecht's Notes to 'Mother Courage'* "—Published in *Encore*, May/June 1965. Translated by Eric Bentley and Hugo Schmidt. p. 48.

[12] "*The Theatre of Bertolt Brecht*"—by John Willett. (Methuen)—p. 50.

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play the gods try to disentangle the situation in a court scene, but having failed to resolve anything, they drift back to heaven on their cloud, still insisting that Shen Teh is the good person for whom they were looking. The curtain closes, and then one of the actors comes out and speaks this Epilogue to the audience:

> "Ladies and gentlemen, don't feel let down:
> We know this ending makes some people frown.
> We had in mind some sort of golden myth
> Then found the finish had been tampered with.
> Indeed it is a curious way of coping:
> To close the play, leaving the issue open.
> Especially since we live by your enjoyment.
> Frustrated audiences mean unemployment.
> Whatever optimists may have pretended
> Our play will fail if you can't recommend it.
> Was it stage fright made us forget the rest?
> Such things occur. But what would you suggest?
> What is our answer? Nothing's been arranged.
> Should men be better? Should the world be changed?
> Or just the gods? Or ought there to be none?
> We for our part feel well and truly done.
> There's only one solution that we know:
> That you should now consider as you go
> What sort of measures you would recommend
> To help good people to a happy end.
> Ladies and gentlemen, in you we trust:
> There must be happy endings, must, must, must!"[13]

Brecht rejected "false" curtain-lines, easy accusations, and simple analyses. In his theatre the audience does the judging and condemning—and then only after a situation has been described in all its complexity and apparent contradictions, and closely related to a wider context. All this served Brecht's purpose which, in addition to entertainment, was to dramatise a method and approach to society which could be applied in any situation and in any conflict. Brecht's social-political philosophy thus produced the technical means of dramatising a Marxist conception of society. Brecht's theatrical technique is, therefore, a method by means of which the problems raised by the content of his plays, can be clearly understood.

Brecht's Critics

It is at this point that one finds a rather ironic situation—not in Brecht's work, but in the minds of several of his critics and the German writer Gunter Grass, whose play, "The Plebeians Rehearse the Uprising",[14] has recently been running at the Aldwych Theatre, London. Brecht has been criticised for many reasons: for being a didactic dramatist; for being schizophrenic; and—in Grass's play—for not being a Marxist at all. In addition, some critics have implied that Brecht is a good dramatist in spite of being a Marxist, and that therefore his political philosophy can be seen as separate from his practice as a dramatist and poet. Any attempt to answer such criticisms can only be made by looking more closely at the content of Brecht's work for, in effect, he answers these criticisms for himself in every play and poem he wrote. The irony in this case lies in the fact that various critics either fail to interpret Brecht's plays correctly—or do not wish to draw the logical conclusions from his work: either way, they ignore the full implications of Brecht's content and technique.

First, what is the relevance of Gunter Grass's play? The plot and the situation of his play is this: a world-famous playwright and director (called the Boss) of a large State theatre company in East Berlin, 1953, is rehearsing his adaptation of Shakespeare's "Coriolanus". The scene under rehearsal is that in which the starving Roman Plebeians rise up against Coriolanus and the Patricians for hoarding grain which the Plebians cannot buy. The part of Volumnia is played by the Boss's wife (Brecht's wife—Helene Weigel?). In the middle of this rehearsal a group of workers suddenly enter the theatre, and ask the Boss to support them in the real uprising taking place on the streets outside the theatre—caused by the raising of their work norms or production levels by 10 per cent. The Boss's wife urges him to support the workers, but instead of helping them, the Boss uses them to add "reality" to his rehearsal of the revolt scene.

Eventually the workers nearly hang the Boss and his Dramaturg, but the Dramaturg manages to dissuade them. At the end of the play, Russian tanks have arrived; the revolt has collapsed; and the Secretary of the Writers' union asks the Boss to write a letter in support of the Government action. The Boss's wife now urges him to write such a letter, but instead the Boss writes an ambiguous letter.

Grass, and those responsible for the notes to the Aldwych Theatre programme, have taken elaborate pains to point out that the play is not about Brecht at all, but—as Grass writes in the programme—is concerned with "a model of the poet and intellectual who does not come to grips with the political reality he has so often invoked". The play is, nonetheless, a cowardly attack on Brecht—cowardly in that whilst attempting to point the similarities between the Boss and Brecht throughout the play (i.e. the Boss is the author of a play in which "mute Katrin sat drumming on

[13] "*The Good Person of Szechwan*": The Epilogue—Translated by John Willett (Methuen).

[14] "*The Plebeians Rehearse the Uprising*"—by Gunter Grass. (Sub-titled: A German Tragedy). Published by Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc. New York: A Harvest Book. Translated by Ralph Manheim.

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the roof"[15]—clearly, "Mother Courage"), Grass publicly denies any such intention. It is thus very difficult to refute what is obviously an implied attack on Brecht. But Grass makes the same mistakes as many of Brecht's other critics—he does not understand the implications of Brecht's work.

Grass's Attack

The basis of Grass's attack on Brecht is two-fold; first, that Brecht did not join the workers' uprising in East Germany in 1953; and second, that he wrote a letter to the Central Committee allegedly supporting Government action, of which only a part of the letter has been made public. But Grass assumes and implies throughout his play that it is the duty of the revolutionary and Marxist to side with the workers in every and any situation—and he makes this assumption without any analysis or examination of the situation in East Berlin in 1953. If the revolutionary does not support an uprising, then he is betraying the people and the movement which he allegedly supports. This assumption by Grass is basic to his play, and it is an assumption readily held by those who are either unaware of the realities of a given situation, or who consider such realities to be irrelevant. Either way, it is a totally un-dialectical and un-Brechtian approach, and one of which Brecht was intensely aware. In numerous plays, poems, and articles, Brecht fought against the falsification of reality, and exposed the futility of an ideal or morality which paid no heed to the concrete situation—in, for example, "The Good Person of Szechwan"; "St. Joan of the Stockyards", and "Galileo". In all his writings, Brecht reveals the dangers of absolute codes and ideals, and of false heroics:

> "*Andrea:* Unhappy is the land that has no heroes!
> *Galileo:* Unhappy is the land that needs a hero!"[16]

Thus, time and again, we see represented on Brecht's stage the realities and pressures of a situation which can and do conflict with or contradict the ideals or moral code of the individual; in a specific yet collective dilemma—and one which can never be resolved without realistic appraisal. Major questions of change, of "which side to choose", or morality, and of the *cost* of change and morality, all come under a microscope from which the audience must deduce their findings. Thus the question the individual asks is not so much that of "should I or should I not support . . . ?"—but rather, "Will what I want to support be more or less instrumental of positive change?"—and—"Has it at least an even chance of success?" These questions, ignored by Grass, are basic to any scientific analysis of a situation, and to the purpose behind Brecht's alienation technique.

Distortion by Grass

If the first part of Grass's attack on Brecht rests on what Grass considers to be Brecht's inaction, the second part is concerned with the action that Brecht did take, but which is distorted by Grass: the letter written by Brecht to Ulbricht after the uprising. Grass makes only one specific reference to his letter—Volumnia (the Boss's wife) takes the letter from the Boss, reads it, and says:

> "Why read this pussyfooting document aloud? Three succinct paragraphs. The first two are critical; you say the measures taken by the government, in other words the Party, were premature. In the third and last something makes you proclaim your solidarity with the same people you attacked in the first two. . . ."[17]

Brecht's letter has not yet been published in its entirety, but there is more evidence for Brecht's reaction to the situation than Grass uses. The actual letter reads, in part, as follows:

> "The SED has made mistakes which weigh heavily on a Socialist party and have turned the workers against it. I am not a member. But I respect many of its historic achievements, and I feel myself bound to it when Fascist and warmongering riffraff attack it not for its own mistakes but for its good qualities. . . . I feel it necessary at this moment to write to you and express my association with the SED. Yours, Bertolt Brecht"[18]

In another letter, written on June 21st, 1953, and printed in *Neues Deutschland*, Brecht writes of the workers' "justifiable discontent" and of "mistakes made on all sides".[19] On August 12th, the same newspaper printed a contribution by Brecht which was more specifically critical and outspoken,[20] and this poem was found after Brecht's death:

> **The Solution**
> "After the rising of the June 17th
> The Secretary of the Writers' Union
> Had leaflets distributed in the Stalinallee
> In which you could read that the People
> Had lost the Government's confidence
> Which it could only regain

[15] "*The Plebians Rehearse the Uprising*"—Act III.

[16] "*Galileo*'—Brecht. Scene 13. Translated by Desmond I. Vesey (Methuen).

[17] "*The Plebeians Rehearse the Uprising*"—Act IV.

[18] "*The Theatre of Bertolt Brecht*"—by John Willett (Methuen)—p. 200, Chapter 7: "Politics".

[19] See footnote 2 of p. 200 above.

[20] "*Brecht: A Choice of Evils*"—by Martin Esslin (Mercury Books: Heinemann)—p. 167: Chapter 7: "Brecht and the Communists".

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By redoubled efforts. Would it in that case
Not be simpler if the Government
Dissolved the People
And elected another?"[21]

Gunter Grass has used the right of any and every writer—that of selection, but he has misused it in that his selection is a distortion of the (admittedly few) facts available. This is not to say that Brecht was right or wrong, but that the complexity of the situation, and the inevitable dilemma, were probably such that (as in "Galileo") questions of right and wrong could not be considered out of the context of a specific situation in a specific moment of historical development. One knows that mistakes have been made, and Brecht says this in both published and unpublished writings. But Grass does not go into the complexity of the situation, and present us with any objective facts, such as they are known. Nor does he really ask his audience to think and judge for themselves.

The Conflict in "Galileo"

Brecht wrote this about Galileo: "—in view of the situation one can scarcely be bent on either simply praising Galileo or simply condemning him".[22] Brecht's play, "Galileo", represents issues and dilemmas central to these questions, and does so in all their complexity and contradictions, in which all aspects are open to debate:

> "Galileo is shown as a man who is right, one of the great heroes of the following five hundred years, who sweeps away all obstacles, but who then collapses and becomes a criminal. That is one of the great difficulties: to bring out the criminal element in the character of the hero. In spite of all, he is a hero—and in spite of all—he becomes a criminal. . . ."[23]

The critic Martin Esslin labels this "duality", and considers that this illustrates something very near to schizophrenia in Brecht. In his book on Brecht, "A Choice of Evils", Esslin writes:

> "Galileo, the hero of science, thus becomes the embodiment of reason in all its splendour, ruined once by its inability to overcome the base, instinctive, inarticulate side of human nature. . . . For the attempt to banish instinct and emotion and to live as a wholly rational being is foredoomed to failure. . . ."[24]

And Esslin continues: "—Although he strenuously denied it in public, Brecht knew that this was so. . . ." But far from denying it, this conflict is a central theme of all of Brecht's plays; far from illustrating any kind of schizophrenic tendency in Brecht, it exactly illustrates the "unity of opposites" which Brecht dramatised time and again.

In Scene 14 of "Galileo", there is a confrontation between Galileo, now an old man, and his former pupil, Andrea, who had been amongst the first and loudest to condemn Galileo for recanting. In this scene Andrea and Galileo meet again many years later, and Galileo gives Andrea a manuscript which he had written in secret and kept hidden[25]:

Andrea: This changes everything, everything.
Galileo: Yes?
Andrea: You concealed the truth. From the enemy. Even in the field of ethics you were a thousand years ahead of us.
Galileo: Explain that, Andrea.
Andrea: In common with the man in the street, we said: He will die, but he will never recant.—You came back: I have recanted, but I shall live.—Your hands are tainted, we said.—You say: better tainted than empty.
Galileo: Better tainted than empty. Sounds realistic. Sounds like me. New science, new ethics.

And a few moments later:

Andrea: . . . You always laughed at our heroes. "People that suffer bore me", you said. "Misfortune comes from insufficient foresight". And: "Taking obstacles into account, the shortest line between two points may be a crooked one".
Galileo: I recollect.
Andrea: Then, in 1633, when it suited you to retract a popular point in your teachings, I should have known that you were only withdrawing from a hopeless political squabble in order to be able to carry on with your real business of science. . . .
You thereby gained the leisure to write a scientific work which only you could write. Had you ended in a halo of flames at the stake, the others would have been the victors.
Galileo: They are the victors. And there is no scientific work which only one man can write.
Andrea: Then why did you recant?
Galileo: I recanted because I was afraid of physical pain.
Andrea: No!
Galileo: I was shown the instruments.
Andrea: So there was no plan?
Galileo: There was none.

[21] "*Brecht: A Choice of Evils*"—by Martin Esslin. p. 165

[22] "*Brecht*"—by Ronald Gray (Writers and Critics' Series: Oliver and Boyd)—p. 83, Chapter 5: "The Later Plays". Ronald Gray translates this comment by Brecht on Galileo, from Brecht's "Stücke", VIII p. 188.

[23] "*Brecht: A Choice of Evils*"—by Martin Esslin. p. 226 Chapter 10: "Reason Versus Instinct".

[24] As above. p. 227.

[25] "*Galileo*"—Brecht. Scene 14. Translated by Desmond I. Vesey (Methuen).

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Multiplicity of Motives

In his last great speech, Galileo presents the conflict clearly, and says that scientists have a sacred duty: ". . . the only purpose of science is to ease the hardship of human existence . . . science can become crippled, and your new machines will represent nothing but new means of oppression . . . I surrendered my knowledge to those in power, to use, or not to use, or to misuse, just as suited their purposes. . . ." —Galileo condemns himself mercilessly, and refuses to allow Andrea to think that he had made a heroic choice; but for the audience much greater issues are raised than that of whether or not Galileo was afraid of physical pain.

First and foremost we see the multiplicity of motives which Esslin seems to think indicates the ultimate triumph of instinct over reason, but which—in effect—demonstrates Brecht's refusal to ascribe either "absolutes" or "simplicity" to human dilemmas and behaviour; secondly, the conflict is much more complicated than that of mere "cowardice" versus "bravery"; vital questions of conscience, responsibility, and foresight, are raised. And it is no accident that this meeting between Galileo and Andrea takes place many years later: time has passed which allows Galileo's recantation to be seen in the past, and in the context of the present.

Thus history has been made, and can now be judged. And it is the audience who must, once again, be the judge, for, as Andrea says just before he leaves: "I don't know how to answer you. But I cannot believe that your murderous analysis will be the last word".—What the audience must decide is partly this: is it more or less important exactly why and what Galileo did, than what the ultimate result of his actions have been? Has he betrayed science in that one moment in time of his recantation—or for all time? Has he, in fact, placed a new weapon of oppression in the hands of the rulers—or, by cheating these rulers of his death, thus allowed himself to carry on working for the ultimate good of mankind? Is there a conflict and a contradiction between science as progress—and the progress of humanity?

If so, to what does one owe allegiance: science—or mankind? Can one pretend that one has never made a great scientific discovery if that discovery can be used to destroy mankind? And what if that discovery could also benefit mankind? These, and many other questions are raised in this scene, and behind all the questions there is Brecht's refusal to separate either science and political philosophy, or art and political philosophy. There is no one simple answer to any of these major questions; nor can any one motive be ascribed to human behaviour in a complex situation. The issues raised are not merely dependent, for a resolution, on what is expedient—expediency itself raises questions of responsibility for the present, and for the future.

The Whole Man

Thus, when an artist or/and a Marxist depicts or describes multiplicity of motives, and conflicting desires, he does so by also describing the pressures or situation which makes one motive or another predominate. To narrate, as Brecht does, a conflict between "reason and instinct", is not evidence of schizophrenia either in his own character or in his dramatic character: he is simply showing the whole man. He is analysing the "unity of opposites" in a way that neither Gunter Grass nor Pogodin, for example,[26] ever do with their shallow, cardboard characterisation. But what Esslin—and others—seem to demand of Brecht is that he present us with an "absolute", without understanding that what Brecht did was to show us the impossibility of an "absolute". For Brecht, people are good and bad; brave and cowardly, leaders yet led; victims—yet also oppressors. This is re-iterated throughout his work, and in a poem called "To Posterity", one verse reads:

> "—For we knew only too well
> Even the hatred of squalor
> Makes the brow grow stern.
> Even anger against injustice
> Makes the voice grow harsh. Alas, we
> Who wished to lay the foundations of kindness
> Could not ourselves be kind. . . ."[27]

In "St. Joan of the Stockyards" (written about 1929-31), the Salvation Army girl, Joan Dark, is shown round the meat factory in Chicago by the Foreman, Slift, in an attempt to convince her that the workers are wicked, and not the society and system in which they live, to which Joan replies:

> "But what mastery you have
> Over their wickedness! How you thrive on it!
> Do you not see that it rains on their wickedness?
> Certainly she would have liked
> To be true to her husband, as others are
> And to ask after the man who supported her
> For some time longer, as is proper.
> But the price was too high: it amounted to twenty meals.

[26] Nikolai Pogodin, born 1900. Author of Trilogy about Lenin: "The Man with a Gun"; "Kremlin Chimes"; "The Third Pathetique"; "Kremlin Chimes" was performed in London by the Moscow Arts Theatre as part of the 1964 World Theatre Season.

[27] "*To Posterity*"—translated by H. R. Hays: "*Bertolt Brecht: Selected Poems*" (Published by Grove Press, Inc. New York and Evergreen Books, Ltd. London).

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And would that young man on whom
Any scoundrel can rely
Have shown the coat to the dead man's wife
If things had gone as he would like?
But the price appeared too high to him.
. . . .
If their wickedness is beyond measure, then
So is their poverty. Not the wickedness of the poor
Have you shown me, but
The poverty of the poor. . . ."[28]

And the whole of Brecht's play, "The Good Person of Szechwan" (written 1938-42) concerns this conflict. In the court scene described earlier, Shen Teh says:

"Yes, it is me. Shui Ta and Shen Teh, I am both of them.
Your original order
To be good while yet surviving
Split me like lightning into two people. I
Cannot tell what occurred: goodness to others
And to myself could not both be achieved.
To serve both self and others I found too hard.
Oh, your world is arduous! Such need, such desperation!
Is quickly wrenched off! He who gives help to the lost
Is lost for his own part! For who could
Hold himself back from anger when the hungry are dying?
Where could I find so much that was needed, if not
In myself? But that was my downfall! The load of commandments
Forced me into the sludge. Yet if I broke the rules
I strode proudly around, and could eat myself full!
Something is wrong with this world of yours. Why
Is wickedness so rewarded, and why is so much suffering
Reserved for the good? . . ."[29]

[28] "*St. Joan of the Stockyards*"—Brecht.—Translated by Frank Jones. (Methuen).

[29] "*The Good Person of Szechwan*"—Brecht.—Trans. by John Willett. (Methuen)

The Communard Exiles in Britain

Stanley Hutchins

(continued from last issue)

Lissagaray

The Commune historian, Prosper Oliver Lissagaray, (his most famous book is "The History of the Commune of 1871") lived at first at 30 Newman Street, London, but moved to 35 Fitzroy Street where he wrote his classic on the Commune, which was first published in Brussels in 1876.

Marx had approved of the text which he had gone over, but did not approve of Lissagaray courting Eleanor, his youngest daughter. It is well known that Lissagaray lived in poverty in London so that his "Histoire" ought to be the more appreciated because of the strain under which he worked.

Charles Malato also, for a time, lived at No. 30 Fitzroy Street.

Poets in Exile

Just around the corner, for an unsettled and, at times, stormy period, lived Arthur Rimbaud and Paul Verlaine, poets in exile as in France. These were not combatants of the Commune, although Paul Verlaine had worked in the Commune's Press Office. They were "compromised", the usual expression for their sympathies for the Commune and their relationships with Communards. Both expressed these in verse, Verlaine writing a moving piece in tribute to Louise Michel, which sold for a high figure a year or so ago. Verlaine wrote also many letters, particularly to his friend Edmond Lepelletier who, in turn, was a close friend of Lissagaray as both had fought on the barricades. Lepelletier and Lissagaray also travelled together, the former was a sincere chronicler of events and personalities associated with the communeux in England. He was probably a good influence on the two poets in exile when in company with them.

The famous French song writer and poet Jean Baptist Clément lived in the same area of Tottenham

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Court Road, on the west side, at first at 23 Newman Street, then on the east side at 4 Mabledon Place and finally in a lodging house at 3 Hunter Street.[1]

Clément was a very active member of the Council of the Commune. He became Mayor of Montmartre, and a plaque at the house where he lived in a square named after him has been there many years. After his return to Paris he tramped through the Ardennes selling copies of his poems, and a journal and conducting socialist propaganda.

His name should be better known in England where he was active in the exiles movement, as it is so highly respected in France for revolutionary and cultural reasons.

General La Cécilia

Clément must have been a close comrade of General of the Commune La Cécilia, who was born in Beauvais, but from a family of Italian origin. Both lived in Mabledon Place and Newman Street. La Cécilia's son was born at 3 Mabledon Place on 7th July, 1872 and lived on in England, becoming a schoolmaster in the Upton Park area of London and in the Potteries after his father had gone abroad. General La Cécilia was one of the few French generals who came out of the Franco-Prussian war with full military honours, his defence of the town of Chateaudun being outstanding. He knew 37 languages and dialects and organised a languages institute in Italy before the Commune of Paris. Chinese was one of the languages in the curriculum. In exile here he taught languages at the Royal Naval School near New Cross, South East London.

He went to Cairo where he died at the early age of 43.

Charles Malato

Charles Malato also lived at 163 Gt. Tichfield Street where at nearby 31 lived Randal Cremer, who was one of the signatories, as a member of the General Council of the International Working Men's Association, to the Address, "The Civil War in France", written by Karl Marx on the fall of the Commune. Malato wrote books on his experiences in exile both here and in New Caledonia. Particularly was he descriptive of London life. Revealing the sordid he also saw the humorous side. In his "Les Joyeusetés de l'Exil" he includes a vocabulary as an aid to the understanding of the English language. Here is a sample: "It is improper to name the male of the hen, whose name is also given to another thing".

A young staff officer very friendly with La Cécilia, named Louis Seguin, with the help of two English friends, escaped to England with the aid of a passport, travel tickets and money for the journey. Amnestied along with others in 1880 he was employed as military correspondent on "Le Temps".

Longuet and Lafargue

Continuing in the same district lived Charles Longuet at No. 33 Rathbone Place. He afterwards moved nearer to the house where lived Karl Marx and whose daughter, Jenny, he married. This was 132 Malden Road. Longuet was elected to the General Council of the International Working Men's Association after his arrival in London.

He had been elected a member of the Council of the Commune and was the first editor of the Official Journal of the Commune. He had been a Captain in the National Guard and fought on the barricades during the last days of the Commune. In exile he taught the French language.

The other communard who married one of Marx's daughters was Paul Lafargue. Before the Commune he lived at 35 Kentish Town Road. On the fall of the Commune he escaped to Spain where he was active, holding a Cuban passport.

He went to England and afterwards settled in France with Marx's daughter, Laura, as his wife. They both are buried opposite "le Mur des Fédérés" where 147 men, women and children were shot in the most inhuman manner.

The man who "kept the books" of the Commune was Francis Jourde. Undoubtedly he would have been shot but for the fact that his accountancy was to the last franc and this seemed to have impressed the "money-minded" tribunal. He was sentenced to deportation and exile to the penal settlement of New Caledonia. He was one of a group of five to escape from there.

In London he lived at 26 Grafton Place, Euston Square.

Pilotell

The Commissioner of Police during the Commune, Georges Pilotell, caricaturist and engraver, lived and died in London. He resided at 87 Euston Road in 1874 and received commissions in portraiture.

His talent was appreciated in all circles, even Queen Victoria and Disraeli sat for him, although they knew of his position in the Commune, which he never betrayed.

He exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1876. He assisted in the costumes displayed on the figures at Madame Tussaud's Waxworks and was a designer for parts in the operas of Gilbert and Sullivan.

He lived, after leaving Euston Road, at 62 York Terrace, Regents Park (near where Engels lived)

[1] Also born in Hunter Street, at No. 54, was John Ruskin, "I am a Communist, the reddest of the red".

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and at 16 Belsize Road, N.W. London. Here his work was in such demand that he could afford a carriage and pair! No doubt this helped him to get orders from his snobbish clients.

It did not however divorce him from the workers' movement. He contributed financially to the "Commonweal" of William Morris. Marat, the revolutionary leader, was a favourite subject of his. He collected a vast amount of original documents and books on him, hoping to write one himself on "The Friend of the People". He was the first to illustrate pantomime programmes, and contributed sketches for ladies journals. He resided in London because he met a Scotswoman who shared similar views.

He was a personal friend of Walter Crane who had a great admiration for the Commune and the communard exiles.

Although Pilotell had fallen out with Henri Rochefort, a fellow exile, he was pleased to note in his diary (shown the present writer many years ago by his late daughter, Clarisse,) "reconciliation with Henry Rochefort".

He died 5 months before the end of the first world war and, due to war conditions, was buried in a mass grave in Kensal Rise cemetery with a number of Belgians.

Both Pilotell and Walter Crane were able to obtain orders for an expert mounter and framer, the communard Guéraud, who had his business in a quaint shop in King's Road, Chelsea, now demolished.

Pascal Grousset

One of the most perceptive Commune exiles in Britain was Pascal Grousset, Minister for Foreign Affairs during the Commune. He lived for ten years in Britain, writing under two pen names. He, as one Englishman put it, "was well acquainted with its language, its literature, its institutions and manners".

Besides writing extensively on life in England, he exposed the miseries and injustices inflicted on the Irish people. Visiting Ireland first in 1886 and 1887 he condemned the way Ireland and her people were treated by the British Government. Also, he was one of the first space fiction authors with his book on a social theme, a trip to the moon.

A great lover of English sport and realising the value of physical fitness, on returning to France he devoted a deal of his time as a socialist deputy to encourage youthful sports. He translated many popular English books into the French language.

Léo Frankel

Léo Frankel, an active member of the IWMA, was one of the two members of the Commune Council who corresponded with Karl Marx during the period of the Commune.

He was Hungarian by birth, and the opponents of the Commune often described him as a Prussian in order to give an anti-patriotic impression of the Commune. He was the Commune's Minister for Labour and Exchange and his department was responsible for important measures to improve the lot of the workers. One of the most important was to seize the workshops abandoned by their owners.

Frankel, after being wounded in the fighting during the last days of the Commune, escaped through the Prussian lines east of Paris as a match seller and then changed his disguise to that of a carpenter.

On arrival in England Frankel went to see Karl Marx, who wrote a letter commencing "Frankel is here. . . ." He was condemned to death by a military tribunal in his absence on September, 19th 1872, but the British Government refused a request from France to extradite him.

Frankel continued his activities in Britain often taking the chair at gatherings in London. He later returned to Budapest where he helped to organise the Socialist Party, then departed to Vienna to work on a newspaper of the movement. Finally he returned to Paris dying there in 1896 at the age of 72. His remains were exhumed in 1968 and with due ceremony were deposited in an honoured place in his native Budapest.

Eugene Pottier

How many of us sing heartily and with feeling the words translated from the French language of "l'Internationale" knowing that they were written by an honoured member of the Council of the Commune? He was Eugène Pottier and the inspiration was, paradoxically, in defeat. Hiding in a house in Montmartre in June 1871 with the savage Versaillese troops seeking all who supported the Commune he wrote "Then comrades, come rally. . . !" But the strength of the workers' resistance had waned and he was forced to escape and go abroad, where he continued his poetry, his appeals and his activities.

In Gravesend he wrote, in July 1871, verses against suffering and starvation, bringing in forest, river, sky and sun. Then, after all the tribulations:

> "this is birth
> and not a funeral—
> you think you are losing
> your entrails,
> but are giving birth".

The birth pangs of revolution! Defeated but not subdued!

Then in 1872 he wrote of "Jean Lebas":

> "Poor little fellow,
> timid and pitiful by nature,

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without a trade, out at the knees
for wages most meagre
passes his days mostly shivering.
Well, one day you will become a man.
Always a working week for you,
One day you will rest!"

He once lodged at 117 Cheapside in the City of London. A short piece on his return from America on the way back to Paris was written in Manchester in 1881 and called, "Révolution Sociale". No doubts here for his continued faith in revolutionary change!

Eugène Pottier died in Paris in 1887. On his tomb in the famous Père Lachaise cemetery is carved a large open book noting his great work, "l'Internationale"[2]

On the first anniversary of his death the demonstration at his grave was so great that the police took violent action to disperse the assembly.

Camélinat

One of the most active Communards throughout the whole of his life was Remy-Zephérin Camélinat, a bronze worker, appointed Mintmaster of the Commune. A devoted member of the International who had suffered imprisonment under the regime of Napoleon III for his activities, both for the Association and his trade union.

He was one of the leaders in the famous bronze workers strike of 1867. The International in London contributed towards the strike fund. During the last days of the Commune he distributed his new franc silver piece (now known as the Camélinat piece and much sought after by collectors) to the fighters on the barricades. From the large building of the Paris Mint (known even now as "La Monnaie"), he personally helped to push, literally through shot and shell, a waggon containing these pieces. He had been a standard bearer of the 209th company of the National Guard. How he was to fight to the end of the Commune's resistance to the Versaillese troops!

[2] The words of "l'Internationale" were set to music by Pierre de Guyter (de Guyter—as on the family tomb. SGH) a Belgian, and were first heard in Lille, after the death of Pottier.

Discussion Contributions on:

Socialism, Democracy and The One Party System

Bill Findlay

"The mountain has laboured, and brought forth a mouse". The mountain of quotations to which Monty Johnstone has played the part of a midwife has delivered not a mouse, but a miscarriage. Quotations are produced which refer to one moment of history and are then applied to another period; others are torn out of their context; some are misrepresented by the accompanying comment; and in other cases inverted commas are used around a phrase or sentence, implying that it is a quotation, but without reference to its alleged source.

All clever stuff for a debating exercise! But for a discussion article, spread over three issues and twenty-three pages of *Marxism Today* to "prove" that a Socialist society *requires* opposition parties, it is just a little too much.

Monty's argument is based upon the assumption predicated in his opening paragraph. After his statement that there are "sharp divergences of opinion and passionate debate . . . on the nature of democracy under Socialism", he continues: "Above all this revolves around the issue of the one-party system, the role of the Communist Party and the right of opposition of other parties, both Socialist, non-Socialist and anti-Socialist". I do not believe this to be quite true. Even if it were true, the article does nothing to explain it or to clarify it.

In his only quotation from *The British Road to Socialism* (on the first page of the article), Monty not only isolates it from the chapter headed "Building a Socialist Society", and from the subsection "Socialist Democracy", in which it appears,

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but from the succeeding sentence in the same paragraph. Only in the context of that chapter, that sub-section, and that paragraph, can the sentence quoted be fully understood.

I accept the Party Programme *The British Road to Socialism*. In particular, I accept the development of a broad popular alliance as the central conception of the Programme.

Broad Popular Alliance

When the broad alliance which we envisage produces a parliamentary majority, the impetus of the mass struggles which made that possible, plus the necessity of implementing the alliance programme, will lead to the acceptance by the alliance of the need for building Socialism as the only solution to all the conflicts and problems caused by monopoly capitalism. In this situation the leading role of the Communist Party will cease to be in doubt.

Other parties outside the alliance will determine their own existence by their ability to secure support, by the character of their opposition, and by their relationship to the laws of the state.

Comrade Johnstone, however, appears to have doubts about the democratic character of the broad popular alliance. The fact that there will be agreement of the great majority of the British people in support of a common programme, and consequently electoral unity within the alliance, resembles quite closely a similar development to some Socialist states where (quoting Johnstone) "non-Communist parties exist but may only function within the framework of a national front, in which the leadership of the Communist Party is accepted and there are no party contests at elections".

Monty Johnstone appears to find this agreement with the Communist Party deplorable. I, on the other hand, believe that, short of an overwhelming majority of the population supporting the Communist Party, the agreement of parties in favour of a Socialist programme must be not only desirable, but indispensable.

Opposing Political Parties

The development of opposing political parties arose out of the historical process. The theory that all governments require an opposition is, however, entirely a bourgeois conception, to be discarded when the exigencies of capitalism and the relationship of class forces demand it.

Comrade Johnstone, who ostensibly set out to prove the one-party system is not a necessary condition of Socialism (no one disputes that anyhow), used his 14,000 or so words and his 213 footnotes to lay bare his belief that opposition parties are essential to the development of a Socialist state. In his reference to a statement by Stalin, Monty implied that opposition parties will of necessity continue to exist in a "classless society". Will he therefore advocate that some future Enoch Powell should then be paid a salary as leader of the parliamentary opposition?

It would be mere speculation to suggest why Comrade Johnstone introduced Trotsky as the equal of Lenin and by inference the superior to all others in the leadership in Petrograd of the Russian revolution. Each reader can, like myself, draw his own conclusion.

It is characteristic of our author's abstraction from reality that nowhere in his article (much of which is irrelevant to his subject, anyhow) does he indicate that democracy has a class character, that there is a distinction between bourgeois democracy and socialist democracy.

Neither does he appear to realise that the existence of parties (eventually also that of the Communist Party) is dependent on the circumstances of any given historical period. The existence of *opposition parties "under socialism"* (Johnstone's phrase) is only relevant as it arises in each particular case. And in no Socialist society is an opposition political party desirable.

INDEX TO VOL. XIV OF MARXISM TODAY (1970)

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John Robson

In relation to the contributions of Andrew Turner and Jack Evans in the January issue of *Marxism Today*, while no-one will deny that the approach of the Socialist countries is rooted in practical experience, it is only through constructive criticism and discussion of these experiences by all involved in the Communist movement that we will arrive at the correct solutions. For, as you pointed out, "no party has a monopoly on polemics".

Initiative of the Masses

"Proletarian democracy is a million times more democratic than any bourgeois democracy",[1] wrote Lenin, but to imply that after 50 years it will necessarily be 50 times that value is crude determinism. Stalin has not permanently retarded the development of proletarian democracy, but there are only a few who would consider that he furthered it. Of course, the major cause for the abuses in this period do not lie in the structure of the dictatorship of the proletariat as conceived by Marx and Lenin. Neither were they inevitable given a one-party system; but the very essence of the proletarian dictatorship as realised by those institutions constituted to enable the smashing of the bourgeoisie as a class (though not necessarily depriving them of equality and franchise), and releasing the full creative initiative of the masses was bastardised under Stalin.

Bureaucracy flourished, and as Marx pointed out "the general spirit of bureaucracy is *secrecy*, mystery preserved internally by hierarchism, externally by acting as a closed corporation. The conduct of state affairs in the open . . . hence appears to the bureaucracy as *treason* against its mystery".[2] And the "cult of the personality" was perpetrated in contradiction to the basic concept that "Socialism cannot be decreed from above. Its spirit rejects the mechanical bureaucratic approach; living creative Socialism is the product of the masses themselves".[3] This is by no means to say that these were the only factors which were decisive in determining the course of proletarian democracy under Stalin, but certainly they are among the more important.

Comrade Evans considers that the coalition of parties representing variations of class interests are relatively ruled out during a revolutionary transition, since the government must be representative of the revolutionary class.

One-Party System and One-Party Government

Let us be sure that the distinction between a one-party *system* and a one-party *government* is clearly made. That is, the one-party system allowing by law the representation of only one party, and the one-party government containing representatives of only one party. It must be noted that the latter does not necessarily exclude a multi-party system. Furthermore, to assume that within the revolutionary class there will not be different expressions of the revolutionary will is a misconception, for, as Engels notes, parties are "the more or less adequate political expressions of these same classes and *fractions of classes*".[4] And although the working class is the most homogeneous class, different sections reach differing levels of political maturity at different times and "the actual movement necessarily expresses itself in very diverse theoretical forms".[5]

Thus for adequate representation of these expressions representative institutions might possibly (though not necessarily) be required to incorporate the voice of revolutionary parties with differing theoretical forms. And a multi-party system capable of representing differences in the revolutionary will of the revolutionary class must be seen as a possible, viable and preferable alternative to the limitations of a one-party system. As Lenin remarked, "*We cannot imagine democracy, even proletarian democracy without representative institutions*, but we can and *must* imagine democracy without parliamentarism . . ."[6]

The view that the one-party system is necessarily implicit as the only system in the works of Marx and Lenin is a gross distortion, and there can be no doubt that Monty Johnstone has shown the true expressions of freedom and socialist democracy inherent in Marxist-Leninist theory and practice. Perhaps historical necessity will determine otherwise but surely it is in the light of these expressions that we must see the way forward.

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[1] *The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky.* Lenin.

[2] *From the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right.* Marx.

[3] *Reply to Question.* Nov. 1917. C.W. 26.

[4] F. Engels. Introduction to Marx's *The Class Struggles in France.* (my emphasis).

[5] Marx to Engels. March 5th, 1869. Selected Correspondence, p. 265.

[6] *The State and Revolution.* Lenin. (First emphasis mine.)

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The Strategy of Socialist Revolution in Britain

Sid Atkin

I read the article of Bert Pearce in the January issue with great interest. It is as he rightly suggests very important that a real study is made of our programme *The British Road to Socialism* and also that it be revised where necessary bearing in mind the time at which it was issued and the rapidity of changes in the modern world.

Whilst we have very few peasants in Britain, we have our own peculiar problems. One of these is the nature of our working class which to some degree has shared in the profits accruing to British Imperialism. Not that this share has been bestowed by British capitalists, but it has been conceded in class battles. In the process, the British workers have built up a formidable machine in the form of the labour movement. The trade unions are the main force with the Labour Party as the political arm of same. These contain a big element of self-help such as benevolent benefits, and the co-operatives also fall within this category.

Important for us today is the decline of British world monopoly with capitalism turning to greater exploitation on the home front. The British worker is of course fighting to preserve his standard of living. The period of concessions appears to be over.

Up to recently, the British worker has not been made interested in *Socialist* politics and efforts to gain support for political activities have not had wide support. The last fair-sized political response was on Suez, but this went far wider than the workers.

Effects of Monopoly

Apart from the workers, the hey-day of British imperialism with its laissez-faire liberal democratic society on the home front created a wide strata of middle class, professional liberals amongst which are classed the Labour Party and Trade Union/Co-op professionals. There also grew up a liberal capitalist section as e.g. Cadburys/Quaker group.

The most significant feature in recent years is of course the growth of monopoly. This has sometimes been a conscious development but mostly it has grown out of the new circumstances of capitalist environment. The development has been rapid and has overtaken the traditional lines of class demarcation. Ideological standpoints are rudely disturbed by the new economics and class relationships. The ideological effect of these developments has probably been more profound on the liberal/social-democratic bourgeoisie than on the workers.

The British revolution must take into account both the economic and ideological factors. The *British Road to Socialism* does this very well. It seems evident that it will not be possible for British capitalism to rule in the old way. Vital areas of its superstructure are breaking down. In the case of Britain, this superstructure not only comprises Parliament, Councils, Courts, State Forces etc., but also the whole paraphanalia of Boards of Industries, Wages Councils, Joint Voluntary Councils, FBI, TUC Committees etc. The nationalised industries are breaking up, Boards of Industry are losing their function of defending home based production, Wages Council and voluntary wage regulations are under duress.

Couple all this with the breakdown in traditional codes of conduct, the revolt of youth and women and there can be no doubt we are in a revolutionary situation.

Anti-Monopoly Alliance

The big question is, where does our Party fit in all this? One thing is certain, either we are able to channel this into revolution or suffer from the chaos that would result from our inability to do so. How much time have we got? I think it can be reckoned in years rather than decades. However urgent, one thing is certain, the working class of Britain is too politically immature to take political power itself and there is no alternative to the broad anti-monopoly alliance. There are of course deep divisions in the capitalist class over the Common Market etc., but these are not decisive. Our prime task is I believe, to try as rapidly as possible to transform the present high feeling over economic attacks like the Industrial Relations Bill into political action directed to parliament and embracing a wide movement for defence of democracy, against cost of living increases, lowering of social and educational standards etc.

In general I am for the greater democratic participation in our own party, collective decisions and the holding to account of individual leaders at all levels to the political committees of the party.

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We suffer from a great weakness in this respect and do not let us blind ourselves to it. The fragmentation of the socialist left wing is one of the most criminal factors of the day—many of them were in and should never have found it necessary in their eyes to leave the Communist Party.

Well, we can look forward to a great expansion of membership. Let us go out for it and let us embrace and cherish all those who join the Cause.

Sid Ogilvie

The article by Cde. Pearce was a significant deepening of the concepts of revolution outlined in the *British Road to Socialism* and if closely studied can be of great assistance in the present discussion on our perspectives. The strength of his arguments in my opinion lies in their fluidity which is the essence of dialectics. Whether or not they satisfy the "certain comrades" he argued against, I couldn't guess since they are neither named nor their arguments explained. However it appears to me that there was a new flexibility in the prognosis on the role of Parliament which is all to the good and if it can be developed and deepened it may save us from the mainly sterile arguments of, for or against violent revolution and direct our attention to the discussion on the direction in which history is taking us and the best form of worker's democracy.

This is the vital centre of any discussion on strategy. Violence is all around us in the form of the army, the police, in the level of militancy of pickets, in prisons, in the schools etc. The success of a revolution is not measured in pints of blood nor is violence something you can take or leave like vegetables instead of meat. Such arguments would certainly seem extremely academic to the people of Northern Ireland.

It was inevitable that the *British Road* would lead to a certain amount of social democratic functioning in the Party with comrades concentrating on the elections in the rigid confines of bourgeois democracy, at the expense of political discussion. The same applies to comrades in industry, with the result that factory branch life has been overridden by considerations of election hopes as in the wards. Industrial comrades become good left trade unionists; comrades in the localities become good left reformists and the time comes when they see the chance of doing these things better outside the Party and they leave.

Bourgeois Parties after Revolution

Thus we find ourselves now in the position that the Party is unprepared for the new situation of morbid decomposition of capitalism on one hand and the increasing mass militancy of capitalism on the other. In other words the very situation which the *British Road* was to have prepared the Party for is coming about and the Party is less prepared than ever it was. The reason for this is not simply the omissions in the *British Road* but the loss of dialectical thought during the reign of Stalinism. Static perspectives have given rise to static thought. Each reacted on the other to produce the *British Road*. Not that I disagree with what it says but more with what it doesn't say. Which is that in Britain the workers will produce their own form of socialist state. This is now being put to right I hope, but before going into that I would like to cover the one fundamental disagreement that I have with Cde. Pearce. I hope I can show that the *relative* loss of dialectics has not been confined to the rank and file.

I cannot accept the idea of bourgeois parties continuing after a revolution. If we allow these Parties to function openly then we must say to them "If you win the election we will allow you to take power and liquidate the gains of the workers". This, if it ever came about, would bring immense social convulsions. It seems to me to be a perspective of continual civil war. If we do not say that, then this point is just an electoral ploy. Cde. Pearce denies this. So I will illustrate my point.

The dialectical process of History is the interaction of opposing social forces in which one force gains in quantity of political strength at the expense of the other until at *a certain point of time* quantity becomes quality and the negation is negated. In England the process of capitalist power began at the precise moment when the head of Charles Stuart hit the scaffold boards. At that time the proletariat appeared insignificant. But at that precise time the new historical epoch was born. Politically the autocratic expropriators of baronial power were expropriated.

It can be argued that there were other events in which the bourgeoisie measured forces with autocracy with more decisive results. I submit that all contests, before and after this time, between the bourgeoisie and the monarchy and feudal privilege were a part of the process of accumulation of forces not its culmination. They may have been the beginning or the end of a phase in the struggle but not of an epoch. The bourgeoisie has had to share its power throughout its existence. But the liquidation of Charles I set the seal on the bid for power by the bourgeoisie and their instrument Parliament. Autocracy was gone forever.

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Likewise the process will end at a precise moment of time when the next epoch will be born. A decree will be read, an act will be passed, a count of votes will be completed and the epoch of capitalism in Britain will end and the new epoch will be born. This I believe is the dialectical approach. And here is where the idea of allowing the bourgeoisie to continue political functioning collides with our theory. The argument that conservative supporters will not change overnight and will be allowed to vote for wage slavery after the taking of power does not hold water from this viewpoint. The social polarisation that we witness at this moment will destroy the Tory Party as it has already destroyed the Liberals; any monster that may be born out of that collapse will be destroyed when the system is overthrown.

Workers' Democracy

I now come to what I consider to be the most valuable part of the article; the role of Parliament and workers' democracy.

My idea of workers' democracy is something like the Bolshevik Party before the 10th Congress in which organised factions were prohibited. Or the Soviet State before all opposition parties were outlawed. In the Bolshevik party any group was allowed to present its ideas on questions of policy and fight for their adoption in the higher organs of the Party. They were given the material facilities to do so and the internal struggle was at times very fierce but as a result of this continual interaction of ideas, the leadership could act with great confidence in their mandate and in the capacity of the rank and file to carry it out. Something more could be done in this way to make the elections to Party posts more meaningful and develop the political ability of the whole Party. We should make the candidates state their views in print on the controversial aspects of National and International policy not what they've done or haven't done. This would mean some loss of monolithism but with it would go the inertia we are now beset with.

However the state I would like to see would be one of "expanding democracy" to use the phrase of Cde. Klugmann. But expanding *proletarian* democracy. I think the bourgeoisie must be disenfranchised. As long as private property in production exists those who have it must lose the right to vote or hold any executive or legislative position. Moreover it is necessary I think, to create a maximum and minimum wage with no more than £10 in present money between them. This is an important aspect of proletarianisation. Of course professional and highly skilled workers might organise their own party to oppose this and should be allowed to do so, with the provision that they did not put a return to capitalism in their programme.

The faster the proletarianisation of society, the sooner will parties lose their class nature and assume a social character. Parties which will in the first instance struggle for redistributions of wealth will gradually become engaged in fraternal argument on the best way to construct the economy. These various workers Parties should fight for power in the legislative organs of State, Parliament and factory councils and local councils. And they should have the use of State publishing facilities to do so. In order that the elected representatives on a local and national level should not be able to practice any demagogic deceptions on the electorate, they must be subject to instant recall by the electorate. The form of democracy must be such that it expands constantly until the whole society, young and old are directly engaged in deciding their future. Such a programme is irresistable.

Above all this disunity must stand a means of coercion. The only way to protect such a democratic structure would be to root that coercion firmly at the point of production. A standing army is a threat to the existence of any regime. And any British Red Army must be dismantled as soon as possible after the revolution in the United States. The role of protecting public property would fall entirely to the workers' militia, the only armed force in the state. The functioning of the militia would be the responsibility of the factory councils. Magistrates would be elected from trade unions and serious crimes would be tried by public tribunal. A system of computerisation and simplification must be made for the other executive state positions which should be filled on a rota basis involving every healthy adult. So that (as Marx said) everyone becomes a bureaucrat so that nobody is a bureaucrat.

Expanding Democracy

Essential above all is planned production for without it capitalism will be resurrected. This much detail in a prognosis may seem utopian but we have a vast wealth of experience of proletarian power to learn from. For instance in Northern Ireland the workers have held their own localities and run them outside bourgeois law altogether, with elections for street committees, their own radio, newspapers etc. for months on end. There is no reason to think that similar things could not happen here with the workers seizing whole cities, localities or even regions in the name of their own organisations. When the revolution occurred in Russia, the power did not simply pass from Cadets to Bolsheviks, it passed from the National Assembly to the Soviets. The proletariat and peasantry had already constructed their state before they took power. The new state was there in the womb, "in concreto", for all to see. As Cde. Solly Kaye has said we cannot

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leave the councils as they are but should demand the involvement of the electorate in decision making. Thus we can work for expanding democracy here and now to develop the proletarian quantitative gains in preparation for the qualitative leap. I hope we will not be blinded by hopes for Parliament when the British masses build their organs of power. Parliament could well be destroyed in the process.

Much more needs to be said on the ripeness of the present situation, but I'll end with the hope that this discussion will continue at all levels and deepen for the building of the workers' leadership is crucial.

Why Did it Happen?

Walter W. Greaves

Maurice Dobb's excellent article, "Why Did it Happen?", could with the exception of two passages, be described as a potted history, cum analysis of "Authoritarian Centralism".

The first exception: Under "Requirements of Socialist Production". It would be unrealistic to propose such a degree of democratisation in industry, or such forms of "direct democracy", as would cause every decision concerning production, including highly technical ones, to become the subject of prolonged debate and convert every workshop into a talking shop. The economic chaos resulting from "anarcho-syndicalist" experiments and tendencies in the early months of the Russian Revolution (when factory committees took over works on their own initiative and ran them independently as they thought fit) convinced the Soviet Government of the need to curb such separatist tendencies drastically, to assert the principle of "one man management" with "personal responsibility", and to impose centralised control of production. In doing so they were undoubtedly right especially in the circumstances of that time; and I have always regarded this experience as holding a valid lesson for all of us and for all time.

Democratisation in Industry

Brushing aside the exaggerations I would say that to compare what happened in a Russian works (I will choose a mechanical engineering and machine tool works, with which I am most familiar) just after the revolution and before any real plan was formed, with say a machine tool works in Czechoslovakia today or as it would be in Britain after we have seized power, is like comparing tribal society with early capitalism. With the improved education of all, the measure of higher education of the skilled workers, together with the administrative staff, draughtsmen, production control, and progress workers, it would be absurd to ignore the accumulated and constantly renewed know-how (most of which can only be learned on the shop floor) possessed by all these workers when planning production.

Together with Communists, the works manager must be prepared and able to convince the workers that the plan which he offers or proposes is really the best for productive efficiency and the social interest. He must be sufficiently self-critical to accept the modifications thrown up in discussions with the workers. Such discussions can only take place in a properly constituted works council. Only the participation of the workers in the discussion on a particular works production plan and their agreement on the correctness of the plan ensure that responsibility for the plans fulfilment is based broadly enough for its success. Any other way tends to create a rift between management and workers, whose interests cease to be the same, when workers are urged to fulfil a plan for which they had no responsibility and in which consequently they have no faith. Considerable power must be given workers councils for we are concerned with the quality of workers lives at work, which is just as important as production, there should be no contradiction between the two.

The second exception: "it is because there is no guarantee that, similar things (the result of Authoritarian Centralism WWG) *may not happen* even in a country such as our own and even if we are successful in achieving peaceful transition along the British Road, that I believe we must steadily and continuously associate our striving for Socialism with *emphasis* upon the preservation not only of the traditional democratic institutions". Or "But from now on, I believe we should include among our first and most cherished principles our resolve to do so to the maximum extent". Or "But such an *emphasis*". Or "Above all we must devote

(Continued on page 128)

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Intelligence, Race, Class and Education

Ouainé Bain

Brian Simon's article was a brilliantly clear exposition of the case against selection and segregation in education, and against the concept of intelligence as a genetic entity. It may seem rather surprising to readers of this journal that this issue still needs to be argued out. Unfortunately, it is not just extremists like Jensen who trigger off such debates. In my experience, there is a large proportion of "rank and file" psychologists, working specifically in the educational field, whose approach is still dominated by the concept of intelligence, if not inborn, at least measurable and delineated by the IQ score.

But one has to be careful that, while one is rejecting the concept of intelligence and the basis of IQ tests, one does not undermine psychometry as such, and the valuable research being done in this field.

Psychometric Research

There was a certain emphasis in Brian Simon's article which could have led to confusion in some people's minds. Accurately, he points out the middle-class bias in most IQ tests. "If anyone constructed a test based on the culture of the blacks in the United States, which, when applied, enabled black children to score more highly than white, it would not be accepted as a "valid" test of intelligence on the grounds that the results fail to correlate highly with the results of a whole backlog of other intelligence tests applied over the years". Fair enough. But is he implying that such a test could, in fact, be constructed and would be any more meaningful than the present ones? He quotes Richard at the CSSRS discussion: "Test constructors 'are middle class white academics, and, not surprisingly, the test items represent their values' ".

Again Simon says, ". . . the findings that working class children are more stupid than middle class children . . . is less a reflection on those measured than an illustration of the essential limitations of those who construct the instruments of measurement". Maybe it's a question of over-emphasis, but from these three quotations, would it be fair to assume that Brian Simon may have led the layman to feel that *any* test which threw up differences in cognitive development between middle-class and working-class children was unfair and biased, and that these differences were simply a case of the slum child not knowing about "poets and presidents".

Bias in Current Tests

To imply this is to undermine the tremendous amount of valuable research done illustrating the effects, even at a very early stage, on a child's development of a limited, unstimulating environment. It is to undermine the whole basis for our fight for *positive* discrimination in education. I will come back to this, but maybe it would be valuable to examine the question of bias in currently-used IQ tests.

Firstly, there can be no doubt that the tests are permeated by items which are unfair to the working-class child. There are many times when the practising psychologist may find himself grinding his teeth with embarrassment at having to administer them. There are two obvious ways in which bias may occur. First, in items which call on direct experiences which are much more likely to have come within the horizons of the middle-class child. These can be illustrated by examples.[1]

In a "Comprehension" item, the child is asked, "What makes a sailing boat move?"—in a "Similarities and Differences" item, comparisons are asked for between a cricket ball and an orange, and between an aeroplane and a kite. There are many more such examples.

Secondly, there is the question of items which presuppose a certain middle-class morality in the child. This is obviously a more subtle thing. There are such examples as:

> "What is the thing to do when you've broken something that belongs to someone else?"
>
> "What's the thing to do if another boy hits you without meaning to do it?"
>
> "Give two reasons why children should obey their parents".

At first glance one would certainly say that a morality is involved, but is it a middle-class any more than a working class one?

[1] Examples are from Stanford-Binet Intelligence Scale, Form L/M—Terman and Merrill—the most commonly used test in educational psychology.

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However, there can be no excuse for a normative test of so-called intelligence including any of the above items. If they throw up discrepancies between classes, then, certainly, these discrepancies are irrelevant and unimportant.

Class Discrepancies

Brian Simon mentioned in his article that the motivation of the child will affect his test scores. It is pretty certain that class differences exist here, and that, in fact, IQ tests, along with the follow-up and critique of them, have helped to reveal them. But let us be clear that motivation to perform well and achieve, is not, one hopes, a permanent middle-class feature but one created by a stimulating environment and existing in the confident child.

There has been a great deal of research in recent years showing that the verbally-stimulated child will not only have advantages in terms of vocabulary, but also in its concept-formation and general cognitive development. Obviously, this child will perform better on an IQ test. Call this middle-class bias if you like, but this must not conceal the fact that these advantages are vitally *important* ones. Bernstein's work on class differences in linguistics indicates that there could be difficulties for the working-class child even in the handling of the syntax of the instructions in IQ tests. For an example take the instructions for the "Similarities and Differences" item: "I'm going to name two things, and I want you to tell me how they are alike and how they are different". The working-class child is less well equipped than the middle-class one to deal with the length and complexity of that sentence. Maybe its worth pointing out, too, that in the Illinois Test of Psycho-Linguistic Abilities, a profile-type test which attempts to break down the processes by which the child receives, understands and transmits verbal messages, there are significant differences between the profiles of working-class and middle-class children—even at a four-year-old level. So far these differences have not been masked by implications that the test is middle-class biased.

Handicaps of Background

Finally, take another look at the IQ tests themselves. Forget that word "intelligence" and examine some of the items in the Stanford-Binet L.M. Many of them, especially at the lower levels, measure simple cognitive and motor skills—for example—copying a circle, counting blocks, following a simple set of instructions, and so on. These are not *intrinsically* middle-class skills—in fact, they are the sorts of abilities that form a basis to the child's educational development. Yet, even here, the handicaps of background are revealed. It is on *this* basis that we fight for more facilities for our working-class children, for resources to be poured into education in deprived areas. We cannot have our cake and eat it. We cannot argue for compensatory education, and at the same time, conceal, however unintentionally, the bald fact that differences between classes are not just an artifact of the IQ test.

Some Current Trends

In saying all this, I am carrying no torch for the IQ test. It bears a heavy cross in that it was the artifact which reinforced and perpetuated the stultifying concept of inborn intelligence. As a measure of cognitive abilities, it is biased, very limited, unconvincingly validated and very poorly standardised (the original Stanford-Binet was standardised on only 1,000 children and 400 adults).

I agree with Brian Simon when he says that the IQ score tells us very little about the dynamics of the child's mental processes nor, I might add, of their potential. But when he goes on to say, ". . . consideration of the crucial questions are thus excluded by the whole apparatus of mental testing", it is here that he introduces an element of "overkill". I agree that the instruments which psychologists have at the moment are crude (and the IQ test is one of the crudest), but surely there is some encouragement in the current trends in this field—attempts, however imperfect, to break down and measure processes, such as in the Illinois Test of Psycho-Linguistic Abilities and the Frostig Test in the field of perception; developments in diagnostic testing in the remedial field; the work of the Hester Adrian Centre in Manchester.

If you undermine our attempts to measure and explore in an organised and scientific way, you are leaving psychologists stripped bare except for their own subjective assessments—and what could be more "value-loaded" and "middle-class-biased" than that?

(Completed from page 126)

ourselves". (My italics WWG) Pious words and hopes but mere wishful thinking!

If we really have faith in the British Road as a serious possibility, it is evident that democratic centralism need not take anything like the same form as is needed in underground movements and, or when violent revolution and, or violent reaction to revolution is inevitable.

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